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CURRENT COMMENT.

RIGHT joyfully was our youth renewed the other day by reading Mr. Harding's intimation—very delicately conveyed, but still all there—that a return to protection would be just about the thing to grease our wheels and increase production. It is a full quarter of a century since we heard that doctrine, and we never expected to hear it again. If it comes out in full feather during Mr. Harding's campaign, we shall not be found wanting in reverence, we trust, for its venerable antiquity.

A PROTECTIVE tariff as a stimulus to production reminds us of Sam Smith, a good friend of our youthful years, *consule Planco*. Sam weighed 320 pounds and being of a hearty habit, felt the heat a good deal. He turned up one day, saying that his doctor had ordered him to drink whiskey in the summer-time to reduce his temperature. Sam rather favoured the prescription, on collateral grounds, and took it very faithfully, but as a specific, it did not work very well; so Sam increased the dosage and kept on increasing it until one night in the dog-days, something gave way as he slept, and he awoke to find himself in a land that is fairer than this.

SAM's procedure was sound, however, from the protectionist's point of view. If whiskey will reduce one's temperature, a good deal of whiskey ought to keep one quite comfortable, and a whole lot of whiskey ought to make one cool as a cucumber. So if a tariff stimulates production, a heavy tariff ought to exhilarate it and a prohibitive tariff that absolutely excludes foreign-made goods, ought to make things fairly hum. The trouble is, however, that whiskey in any quantity does not really reduce one's temperature nor does a tariff really stimulate production. We would go on and show why, but for the fact that our reader can think it out quite easily for himself, and also that correspondents would be apt to write in, as one does this week, and litter up our correspondence-column with letters telling us how much we remind them of "the gospel according to Henry George." Henry George was a truly great man, the one economist of the very first order that this country has produced; but it is not clear why he should be accorded an implicit monopoly of such plain horse-sense as may now and then be displayed in lucid moments by his inferiors.

BUT we would almost be willing to vote for Mr. Harding and Mr. Coolidge if only they would stop talking about production. When they get through informing us that what the country needs, and what the world needs, is more production, we feel as Panurge felt after his interview with Raminagrobis, and would express ourselves as he did, except that it would not be quite urbane to do so, and furthermore, we are aware that such talk as this is about the best that Mr. Harding and Mr. Coolidge can do. When an officeholder of the type of Mr. Newton Baker talks that way, as he sometimes does, the case is different; for Mr. Newton Baker knows better, and he therefore unquestionably speaks as he does because it suits some purpose of his own to do so—and this is clap-trap. Mr. Harding and Mr. Coolidge, however, on the general evidence of their published utterances, can be cleared from any suspicion of disingenuousness. There can be little doubt that they recite these platitudes as having learned them practically verbatim, with rather less than a parrot's notion of what they mean or what they imply.

OF course the country needs production. But think a moment. Take the simplest and most important mode of production—agriculture. Here is a young man, able-bodied, a competent farmer, with, say, \$5000. He hears Mr. Harding's call to produce and forthwith dutifully sets about to do so. What happens? He needs land; and the land-owner says, "Pay *me*—and not a fair price, but the price determined by fundamental monopoly." He needs more money; and the banker says, "Pay *me*—and not a fair interest, but at pawnbroker's rates, rates that will land you in the tenantry after more or less of a struggle." He needs transportation, and the railways say, "Pay *me*—not a fair tariff, not even as in the old days, 'what the traffic will bear,' but what is needed to enable the railway to continue operating as a dividend-producer and fortune-builder rather than as a public-service utility." The Government says, "Pay *me*—pay a tax, direct or indirect, on your every improvement, on every ounce of your product, on every dollar of your income." And so it goes; until by the time every form of privilege—and he meets nearly all of them—gets through briskly frisking him, his productive capacity is pretty well down to zero; and whatever privilege itself overlooks, its agent, the Government, manages to squeeze out of him. If the producer is thoughtful enough to put two to two and make four, he can formulate some questions which we should hate to see Mr. Harding and Mr. Coolidge compelled to answer.

ONE column of the newspaper told of Governor Coolidge's acceptance speech. In the cloistral quiet of the Hampshire hills, in white-cottaged, green-lawned Northampton, the candidate talked of some far-away unrest, and of the cause, and of the remedy:

If the great conflict has disturbed our political conditions, it has caused an upheaval in our economic relations. The mounting prices of all sorts of commodities have put an almost unbearable burden on every home. . . . Production must be increased.

A neighbouring column epitomized the investigation of the steel-strike by the Interchurch World Movement. Out from hot open-hearth towns with their smoke-stack trees and their tar-paper shacks, come investigators with their description of unrest at close range, of their belief with

Governor Coolidge, that the cause is the inability of the wage to meet the living-cost, and their conviction that increased bread must precede increased work. They estimate that there are

three-quarters of a million of the nation's population who have their lives arbitrarily determined . . . by the lowest pay in the steel industry. . . . The annual earnings of seventy-two per cent of all workers were, and had been for years, below the level set by Government experts for families of five. This standard being the lowest which scientists are willing to term an 'American standard of living,' it follows that nearly three-quarters of the steel workers could not earn enough for an American standard of living.

And the investigators suggest—a minimum comfort wage! A hunkie might follow the advice of the Cloister. He might ask fourteen instead of twelve hours a day, stoke faster, and at the lunch whistle, put an arm white-veined with sweat across the shoulder of some skilled worker and say: "Brother, can we not co-operate more mightily for production?" Or he might stand pat on the minimum suggestion that has come from the Hearth, and say: "More bread, more work." Or again . . .

ONCE again the heroes of the National Security League have come to the rescue of civilization; this time by appealing to the leaders of the Republican and Democratic parties to forget their quarrels and stand shoulder to shoulder in those Congressional districts where there is danger of the election of the Socialist candidate. Thus in the Twentieth district of New York, where our national security is threatened by the election of Mr. Morris Hillquit, the League urges the supporters of the Senator and of the Governor to look upon the differences between them as if they were in fact nothing at all. In the Twenty-first district, just across the street, the League allows that the sound and fury of the dispute about the League of Nations can go on at full blast, but in the Twentieth district all must be patriotic unity and concord and the League of Nations be as if it were not. In face of the common enemy, says the Security League, loyal supporters of the two gentlemen from Ohio must get together and be as thick as—as a band of brothers. Well, this is sound advice and it is not likely to fall on deaf ears. Messrs. Harding and Cox are old political hands and we may safely give them credit for knowing that there's a lot of truth in Mr. George M. Cohan's famous dictum, "many a bum show has been saved by the flag."

At last the League of Nations has taken on a job that is just about its size. It has veered off from unpractical and dubious undertakings like making the world safe for democracy and unifying the conscience of mankind, and has gone in to make Europe comfortable for travellers and to unify the passport-regulations. This is something like; this is prepossessing and profitable and worthy of praise. At its first session at San Sebastian the League will empower the International Transit Commission to carry through the details of this great and beneficent work. The League of Nations was a long time finding the long-felt want, but all will be forgiven if it makes good, and innumerable irreconcilables will change from an attitude of suspicious opposition to one of enthusiastic favour. One can imagine Senators Reed and Borah coming back from the grand tour converted and captivated. We never have been able to see how President Wilson was going to reap any credit for his great invention, but we see it now.

THE country can now begin to exercise its hindsight on the Esch-Cummins transportation-law. Passenger-rates and excess-baggage rates will shortly go one-fifth higher, Pullman fares will take on a surcharge of fifty per cent, and freight-rates will go up from twenty-five to forty per cent. There is a grim irony in the item of freight-rates, because nobody can get any freight moved anyway, apparently, so the charge for the attempt might as well be high as low, as far as results go. It is an odd and amusing situation, and arouses no particular

sentiment of either indignation or sympathy because the country stood by in the dazed quiescence of an ignorant dullard, and watched the Government crown its record of audacious rapacity with the infamous largess to privilege expressed in the Esch-Cummins law. Now it can pay the bill; or, more correctly, make good on the Government's commitment. There is nothing lamentable about this; it is part of an education that, in these days, no country can afford to do without, and of which this country especially is in great need. American business will try to adapt itself to the requirements of this extraordinary swindle, and the effort will be reflected as usual in the general price-levels; which again, is quite all right. To make sure that one can not lift oneself by one's bootstraps, there is nothing like tugging at them until they break.

PRESIDENT WILSON "orders miners to go back to work," according to the headlines; and Mr. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, has, according to the same authority, officially called off the strike in the trouble-infested coal-fields, notably those of Indiana and Illinois. There have also been conferences of one kind or another, as there always are, about the emergency-direction of coal-shippments. The conferees and committees and commissions and presidents and secretaries and so forth, have all been commendably busy, and have gotten large space in the papers, and have worked out plans that sound enterprising and prosperous, but the mischief of it is that the actual coal available—that is to say, the coal that is where you can get it when you want it—is getting a little low. Bill Nye once spoke of a hotel which got out a bill of fare chiefly as a literary effort; and there is a good deal of this about the work of these commissions and conferences. Their estimates make good enough reading and afford diversion of a mild type, but are not worth a cent for steaming purposes. With things as they now are, it looks like a stringency next winter; and this may be all a part of a deep-laid scheme on the part of the captains of industry to enforce closing-down and enlarge the percentage of unemployment. Some say so, but one must remember that many are born with a keen scent for mare's nests. Our notion is that there is obstinate trouble of long standing—dating, we should say, from about the time of the Indiana injunction—in the coal-fields; and that the reason why the coal does not come along in reassuring volume is that there are not enough pairs of biceps waving the stubborn pick-helve to and fro. We may be wrong about this, but it is our guess. The injunction policy, Palmerism and Allenism, all sound first-rate in the news, but it may yet be found that like the backwoodsman's rifle, they kick as far as they carry—perhaps even farther.

THAT great kaleidoscope called "the international situation" is still revolving at standard speed and showing new and brilliant phases every day. The Allied Powers seem to be falling farther and farther out. France suspects England of attempting improper relations with Russia—one fears, alas! with too good reason—and, according to the dispatches, what M. Doumergue and others said about England in the Chamber last week would make a session of Sinn Feiners take an amateur rating. Then, too, Greece and Italy have come to severe recriminations, Italy alleging that Greece has smothered about four times as much territory in Thrace and Asia Minor as was agreed upon; while Greece declares that unless Italy hands her over the Dodecanese Islands, she will not sign the Turkish treaty. It is really an experience, nowadays, to go over newspapers of two or three years ago, and recall the magnificent impression of solidarity and unanimity that the Entente Powers gave at that time. But there is no need of reminders, for we can all surely remember how we ourselves were talking about our Allies; and what we say about them now is commonplace enough. Meanwhile, a recent interview with Lenin records the fact that he laughs easily. One would think he might

give that appearance, somehow, even though laughter might not be a natural habit with him. In Lenin's place, an Indian would laugh himself into permanent infirmity. We do not mean a live Indian, either; we mean a wooden Indian, such as one sees sometimes on the sidewalk in front of cigar-stores.

PICTURES of Ireland as paid pensioner and England as philanthropist have recently been done by two Britishers. Viscount Bryce in an article called "What America Ought to Know: England's Real Attitude," in the American edition of the London *Times*, declares that England has long ceased to oppress Ireland, and he adduces as evidence of England's beneficence "the sums of money which Parliament has voted for Irish purposes during the past thirty years." William Coote and his delegation, in a pamphlet entitled "Facts from Ireland for Consideration of American Citizens" aver that "Ireland indirectly receives back much more than she contributes for Imperial purposes."

THESE pictures are not done from life. This paper some time ago published a statistical statement from Mr. George Russell which effectively disposes of this peculiarly barefaced humbug. Erskine Childers in the *Freeman's Journal* of 9 July remarks the fact that even the Belfast Chamber of Commerce has shown in its last report that England makes an enormous annual profit out of Ireland. And *Young Ireland* of 26 June declares more particularly that the balancing of the English account by English clerks according to English rules, shows the surplus that England gets from the Irish taxes after Irish services are paid for, as follows: in 1916, a profit of £5,332,000; in 1917, of £11,080,500; in 1918, of £13,863,000; in 1919, of £15,118,500.

GLADSTONE said in the days of Arabi Pasha that the Government had no intention of occupying Egypt permanently. Sir Edward Grey said the same about Persia. All the great Governments of the world agreed in the Algeiras Act to maintain the integrity of Morocco. British Ministers stated sincerely and emphatically that they would never be parties to annexing the territory of the Boers. The reasons for changing these policies are well known. For a long time France was to blame for the British occupation of Egypt—so it was said before the Entente came into existence; thereafter the policy of occupation had to be continued for the protection of capital that had been invested by Britishers in developing the country. With regard to Persia, where Britain had sworn to maintain independence and integrity, there were many reasons advanced for a change of policy. One was that the imperial ambition of Russia had to be checked; another was the necessity of the British policing the Persian trade routes to protect the mails. Mr. Morgan Schuster has mentioned others that are even more convincing. There is scarcely a State from Korea to Morocco, from Cape Town to Tibet that has not been at some time during the last century the victim of a change of heart and mind on the part of some Foreign Office. But not often has the reason for such a change been flatly comic. For the preposterous and ridiculous we have waited until the Polish adventure, and now we learn from Paris that "France believes her entire eastern European policy must soon be radically revised." Sentiment among the French political and financial men for such a change is deep. What is the reason assigned for this momentous, even dramatic, change? It is because malingering has set in among the Polish officers. We are told that the highways are blocked by fleeing subalterns, and that hundreds of them were to be seen "in the towns and cities in the rear of the army spending money lavishly on women and champagne instead of leading their men in battle." Now, ludicrous as this may seem, it is a perfectly good reason for making a change in the entire Eastern policy of France, particularly as it is said that the breakdown of the Polish adventure means a loss of more than twelve

millions of French money. If this has not been a case of throwing good money after bad, there is no such thing.

It may be remembered that in one of its early issues, this paper suggested the high probability of a military intrigue between the Kapp-Lüttwitz junker revolutionists and certain British military officials. Just prior to the Kapp-Lüttwitz *coup* it was known that two or three distinguished German military men had visited London and were received by military officials there. The suggestion thrown out at the time by this paper seemed extravagant to some, and to such we commend the perusal of Mr. Winston Churchill's recent appeal to Germany, in an article for the London *Evening News*. Entirely apart from the unusual procedure of a British Minister tendering journalistic service to the Northcliffe press, or any press for that matter, one finds here the real Churchill bent on doing his customary and regular double duty. The one duty is that of keeping the guns roaring and the sabers rattling, anywhere and everywhere, so long as there is doubt of the old order finding its comfortable pre-war position. The other duty is to assist the junkers of Germany to regain ascendancy over the so-called Democratic party there. Of course, his way of putting the case is primarily for the unsophisticated eye. He says:

If the Germans are able to render such a service, not by reckless military adventure or with ulterior motives, they would unquestionably have taken a giant step upon that path of self-redemption which would lead them surely and swiftly as the years pass by to their own great place in the councils of Christendom, and would render easier sincere co-operation between Britain, France and Germany on which the very salvation of Europe depends. It is open to the Government to build a dike of peaceful, lawful, patient strength and virtue against the flood of Red barbarism flowing from the East, and thus safeguard her own interests and the interests of her principal antagonists in the West.

CHURCHILL and self-redemption!—excellent! When George Wyndham used to say of the aristocracy of Europe, "We are all one family and all stand or fall together," folks used to smile good-naturedly, because there was always something so engagingly frank and harmless about that romantic parliamentarian; but when Churchill suggests anything of this sort it is time to take to cover. In Germany lies Mr. Churchill's opportunity of reuniting the aristocracies of Europe against what is called bolshevism; it is just the occasion to give him all the thrills that aristocratic flesh is heir to. It must be remembered that it is one thing to defeat a neighbouring power in a political and commercial sense; it is quite another to reduce it to a republic. Indeed, as was shown by Lord Milner and his friends before the war was concluded, law and order would be better preserved in Europe if the Kaiser and his friends had remained in power. Although the Kapp-Lüttwitz affair went off at half-cock, the intrigue was not abandoned. It is said quite openly now that British officers in Germany are discussing with certain German military leaders the possibility of joint military action against the Soviet Government if the Polish front should crumble away. But who is the simple Simon that can be taken in at this time of day by such a policy? Not the Simons who went to Spa, evidently, judging by his speech before the Reichstag the other day, in which he talked plain good sense about the Soviet Government and showed clearly on which side the German bread is buttered.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

MR. CHURCHILL'S ACTIVITIES.

THE memorandum of General Golovin, the White Russian representative in London, which has been published in full in the British papers, has created something of a sensation in Europe. It seems that copies of this memorandum were sent to Sazonov and General Shtsherbetshev, the political and military authorities of the White Russians in Paris. It is, to say the least, one of the most extraordinary documents that has come out of the war, and it has a special interest for all those patriotic Americans who have relatives and friends engaged in humanitarian enterprises in Poland and Russia.

The memorandum refers to the negotiations which passed in London a year ago last May between General Golovin and Churchill, with Sir Samuel Hoare, a member of Parliament, acting as intermediary or go-between. The document starts out to impress its readers with the strict secrecy that was to be observed, stating that "Churchill was all the time very careful to avoid meeting Russian war representatives, being afraid of criticisms on the part of the Left elements, and perhaps on the part of Lloyd George." Because of Churchill's reluctance to come in direct touch with Golovin it was arranged that the Russian representative should prepare a short memorandum of his requirements, to be laid before the British minister. It seems that there had already been handed to Hoare, Golovin's appreciation of the strategic situation in April as well as his report on the operations, which included a description of the plan of attack against Petrograd. This appreciation had previously been submitted to Marshal Foch's headquarters in Paris. After many difficulties met by the go-between in arranging an interview, Churchill hesitating, doubting whether he would "violate his outward cautiousness toward us," it was decided that Hoare should act as a reporter. In this preliminary skirmish we are told that Golovin "exposed to Hoare all our needs." The memorandum then describes the nature of the negotiations and names the date when they were concluded: 1 May, (1919).

The conversations with Hoare bore already fruits by 3 May, as, on that day, I was told that many of the questions which I put forward had already been agreed upon, such as the wireless station for Ekaterinodar, the keeping of the troops in the north, the volunteers, the placing at our disposal of a steamer for the transfer of our officers to Vladivostok. During the next few days (3-4 May) I handed to Churchill through Sir S. Hoare, excerpts of those telegrams which were transmitted to me from Paris (a) about the Finnish detachments operating in Karelia; (b) about the necessity of bringing the Allied fleet to Kronstadt in case of the Finns taking Petrograd. With reference to (a) I asked that the Finnish detachments should be answerable to the Allied command and that Russian detachments should be attached to the Finnish detachments operating near Petrograd.

I was told in reply that everything would be done, and that it will be reported to Paris by the British General headquarters.

On the evening of 4 May I had an interview with Sir S. Hoare. He had just returned from a visit to Churchill, and told me that the latter is extremely interested in the Yudenitch business as well as in all the questions which I had raised. To Hoare's surprise he had read not only the short memorandum, but also the other two notes mentioned above, and Churchill had, after perusing them, handed them over to the Head of the Operative Department, General Radcliffe, for detailed study. At the same time Hoare transmitted Churchill's invitation to come and see him personally, as well as the Head of the Operative Department, for further conversations.

The preliminary negotiations having been conducted without Mr. Lloyd George and the "Left elements" learning anything about them, the representative of the White Russians was requested to appear in full military uniform at the War Office, where in interviews with General Radcliffe the needs of Kolchak, Denikin and Yudenitch were considered.

It was necessary to send off as soon as possible 500 officers to Archangelsk, but we had no money and no means of transport; for these same reasons the despatch of officers to the armies of Admiral Kolchak and General Denikin were being delayed; secondly, it was necessary to collect at once all the officers and soldiers willing to fight against the Bolsheviks in separate camps. I also added that even if the question about Yudenitch should not be decided in the positive sense, ordinary humaneness demands that we should give the possibility to those who do not wish to go to the Bolsheviks to keep themselves up for at least some time; that all this could be done under the cover of the Red Cross, and that then the formation of detachments could begin.

In reading this suggestion of Golovin as to what could be done "under the cover of the Red Cross" we are reminded of Matthew Arnold's references to the Red Cross activities during the Franco-German War, which are to be found in his "Friendship's Garland." How much has been done during this struggle against the foes of civilization and humanity, "under the cover of the Red Cross" will not be learned yet awhile, but it will be profoundly interesting when it comes to light. Then to show to what depth parliamentary institutions have fallen in the estimation of the military authorities, General Radcliffe promised to do everything in the power of the War Office to give Yudenitch the necessary support, and it was decided to send immediately a special mission to General Yudenitch, and that "at the head of this mission [there] be placed one of the influential British generals." On the evening of the day when the military arrangements with General Radcliffe were concluded, General Golovin was received by Mr. Churchill, who "displayed extreme kindness." Churchill explained why he had been unable to meet the higher representatives of the Russian Army: "owing to the political conditions of the moment he had to keep a secret of many things." And naturally being anxious—never nervous, however—about having a White Russian in full uniform in his house, he earnestly asked "in the name of the common cause, to keep our relations and our conversations in full and strict confidence." Presumably he was haunted on the one hand by the shadow of Lloyd George, and on the other by the disturbing spectres of the "Left elements."

The report indicates that General Golovin not only has an excellent memory, but that he has somehow missed his vocation and should have been a delineator of character. What he describes sounds like Churchill and like no one else. Here it is:

The question of giving armed support was, for him, the most difficult one. The reasons for this were—the opposition of the British working-class to armed intervention. But even in this matter, without promising anything, he would try to help. He had declared in the House of Commons that fresh forces were necessary for the purpose of evacuating the north. He would send, under this pretext, up to 10,000 volunteers, who would replace the worn-out parts, especially the demoralized American and French troops; that he will postpone the actual evacuation for an indefinite period (but will not speak about it); that he agrees upon the help of the newly arrived British troops being actively manifested. That in case of further advance by Admiral Kolchak he would be willing to give active support to the left flank; he does not reject the possibility of help to Yudenitch on the right flank. In short, he will do all he can, but again added that the success of our common cause demanded great

secrecy. It was very difficult for him to send military forces to the aid of General Denikin because as far as the North was concerned, he had a pretext—that of supporting the British troops already there. But the idea of supporting Denikin, were it even by volunteers, would be carried out by him; he would send up to 2,500 volunteers under cover of instructors and technical troops, and if these will fight side by side against the Bolsheviks, this will, of course, be natural.

Attend, all ye Americans who were "demoralized" in the Murmansk, and learn how, under a pretext, Mr. Churchill, the British War Minister came to send troops in to replace you! You did not know at the time that it was merely a pretext for giving greater support to the White Russian armies; but perhaps that does not matter, now that you are safely out of that disagreeable spot. It is the first time perhaps you have learned that you were "demoralized," and you must not be surprised after reading this report of how the pretext was arranged, if you should some day learn that "the opposition of the British working-class to armed intervention" has made itself felt to such an extent that Mr. Winston Churchill will never be able to find a constituency in the length and breadth of the British Isles to consider him as a candidate for Parliament. They are a strange lot, the British working-class, when they take offence, and odd as it may seem to us, they sometimes have quite a way with them when they learn that their money taken in taxes has been misused. General Golovin says that Churchill told him that he was ready to give the fullest possible material support and that he meant to continue to do so; indeed "for this he intends to ask for 24 million pounds sterling for the supply of all our fronts and if the circumstances will require it he is willing to supply armaments and other materials for the Northern army and for General Yudenitch for another 100,000." All this under the pretext of replacing "the demoralized American and French troops so that assistance might be given to the evacuating army." Then "he will ask this same day for the necessary credits for the despatch of 500 officers to Archangelsk, England taking upon itself their financial support (travelling expenses, salary)." Such generosity requires a courage that should be proof against Lloyd George and the "Left elements." Clive himself in India never aspired to such courage as this. Indeed his expression at his trial, "My Lords, I am amazed at my moderation," will never be said by Churchill when he has to face impeachment.

Of course it would be impossible to leave General Sir Henry Wilson out of such a business as this, and so an orderly was dispatched forthwith to consult him at the general headquarters in Paris; and in another document, described as a summary of the "Monthly War Diary of the British Military Mission in Siberia," we learn that Sir Henry Wilson, together with General Knox, chief of that Mission in Siberia, were never left out of any of Winston Churchill's deals; that they were indeed marching in step with him on every mission he undertook. In summing up the events of his visit to London, General Golovin informed Sazanov and Shtsherbetshev that "in Churchill we have not only a man who sympathizes with us, but also an energetic and active friend. This is the reason why I give special importance to one remark made at the beginning of our conversation. Churchill told me that in all Russian questions he recognized only Admiral Kolchak, that he took no measures without Kolchak's consent; among others he expressed himself thus: 'I am myself carrying out Kolchak's orders.'"

So the British Minister of War was carrying out Kolchak's orders, and in all Russian questions he recognized him only! The Premier, the Cabinet, the House of Commons, the British taxpayers, the working-class, the "Left elements," were merely the tools Churchill used to assist the French Russian bond-holders and the international mineral and oil interests in restoring the Tsarist regime!

It is a good, a first-rate, picture of the state to which parliamentary institutions have fallen; and of course they would fall to this level in any war that was "fought for democracy." And yet there are people in all countries who look in amazement on the activities of bolsheviks of all kinds and communists of all nationalities and races, and these people think that by jailing a few, and deporting a few, things will somehow after a while settle down in the good old easy way. They are living in a fools' paradise, and the sooner they wake out of it, the better it will be for all.

The memorandum of General Golovin has created a pretty bad smell in Europe and most of the British papers of any importance, in commenting upon it, seem to be roused out of their customary apathy. The cautious *Manchester Guardian*, for instance, says:

Of the extreme public importance of the recent disclosures there can be no doubt, and the recollection of them must always in future rise up between Mr. Churchill and the minds of the electors whenever he professes to be taking the electors into his confidence. That he can play them tricks behind their backs and carry on very imperfectly loyal secret intrigues, at their expense, with the agents of a foreign revolutionary conspiracy, is a fact that must hereafter recur unpleasantly to the mind when his frequent pose of extreme democratic candour is most elaborate. . . . And as long as we are still so much as £100,000,000 short of solvency, none of us is likely to forget that this is what, at the lowest, Mr. Churchill's intrigue with the Russian Whites cost us, in money alone.

Yes, and when Americans think that the money they loaned to Europe went to the same general purpose, we can not help but wonder what a difference half a billion dollars would make if we had it in our pockets instead of watching it squandered on a *cordon sanitaire* by men engaged upon one of the most stupid and futile tasks that ever dishonest politicians set their hands to.

THE WANDERERS.

No one has crossed the threshold of Russian literature without becoming acquainted with those "superfluous men," those "unhappy wanderers in their native land" who, throughout the nineteenth century, haunted the pages of Russian poets and novelists. Pushkin first drew the type, but how many Alekoes there have been since his Aleko sought for the ideal in the wild life of the Gypsies; how many Onyegins since his Onyegin felt himself nowhere more an exile than in Russia! Blades of grass, as Dostoevsky says, torn from the roots and blown through the air, agitated and unsatisfied, loving their country but not trusting in it; aware of its ideals but not believing in them; incapable of any work in their native land and looking with scornful derision upon those who find work that suits them; distrustful also of themselves, consumed with ennui and self-contempt, these wanderers are indeed to the casual eye the most typical figures of the old pre-revolutionary Russia.

And now such types have become familiar in America. One does not, to be sure, find them in our literature; that is one reason why our literature is not entitled to its name. But one finds them in our life, by the score. Well-conditioned, well-brought up,

well-educated, having had all the "advantages,"—who does not know them, these "superfluous men" of ours who deny the "national truth," who "do not want to work with others," who "suffer sincerely?" If they do not go to Paris, they go to the South Seas, or to Russia! If they do not seek their ideal in the wild life of the Gypsies, they seek it in the I. W. W. Like Aleko, they have "only a yearning for nature, a grudge against high society, aspirations for all men, lamentations for the truth, which some one has somewhere lost and which [they] can by no means find."

These men exist, they are the germ, one might almost say, of a new race; they have become indeed one of the formidable facts of our civilization. For American society has developed in such a way that it can scarcely command the allegiance of sensitive men. Our universities boast that they are becoming help-mates of business; our tradition has brought us to a point where the business life has become the "normal" life for American youth. But few have as yet observed the inevitable reaction. The machinery of business speeds forward faster and faster and, as it speeds, human nature becomes, beneath the surface, more and more recalcitrant. The most cynical, the most thick-skinned of men begin to ask themselves whither they are going and for what purpose. The others, the more conscious, the more gifted, those who have tasted life and the world, those who have cherished a dream of justice or of beauty find themselves tossed by the wayside. What have they to do with this mechanical America?

They are not children of this clime,
But of some nation yet unborn.

The war, of course, has greatly enlarged this class. Many a young business man who would have gone on complacently mumbing his oats has become a mal-content for life, thanks to a few furtive glimpses of a civilization more gracious than ours. This mechanical America can not stand the test of a comparison. But we had our bolshevists of the spirit before ever America heard of the bolshevists of the flesh. We are, indeed, a nation of neurotics, a fact from which one derives a certain consolation: that we comprise more men of good will than one is inclined to suppose in moments of despondency. For it is certainly true that while neurotics may not be men of good will, men of good will, confronted with the America of the present, almost inevitably become neurotics; and a multitude of the latter argues at least a large proportion of the former. These wanderers of ours, who can not find themselves, who can not fit in, these victims of mal-adjustment, of every known Freudian complex, are they not visibly manufactured by conditions of our life, economic, religious, educational, domestic, upon which the most casual diagnostician can lay a confident finger? And if we are a headless, a leaderless, an anonymous people, as headless and anonymous as those peasant peoples of Eastern Europe whose educated classes have been seduced away from them by their imperial masters, is it not because these are our natural leaders, these men who have fallen to the ground, as apples drop from a tree whose vitality has been so sapped that it can not support them? Heine showed how the gods of Greece became devils in an age when men refused to recognize their divinity. By the law of its being, commercial America turns into tramps and outlaws the very men who are most capable of redeeming it.

But they are going to redeem it! One feels this with a strange confidence. They are going to redeem

it precisely because, the further they descend in the social scale, the more convinced they become that the ideals of commercial America are fraudulent ideals, the more aware they become of themselves, the more profoundly they understand the American people (from within outward, from the bottom up), the more they perceive the unreality of what at present passes for literature, art and religion, the more sensitive they become to the ideas, the intuitions, the gospels of the great companions who have given to mankind its literature and its religion. We have scarcely in half a century witnessed in America the appearance and the progress of a great writer; what do we know of the electrical powers of literature, what do we know of the laws of the literary life? This desocialization of the gifted and the well-disposed is, if one is to judge by history, the natural first step in the evolution of the true illuminati: it is the becoming again as little children, and when these little children begin to grow up in their own way, when they become, as certain of them can not fail to become, masters of themselves, then let commercial America look to itself! "Books," said Thoreau, "which even make us dangerous to existing institutions—such I call good books." These books are going to be written, out of such a draught of understanding that the people will read them gladly. Who will be America's out-laws then?

But the road will be a long one, and Dostoevsky was right; these wanderers must understand that "truth is to be found only within themselves." If they despise America they will deserve the fate that prevents them from realizing their luminous aims. A true instinct has driven them outside society, but they are, for the most part, victims of their own culture, not of poverty. They are not entitled to bitterness. Having access to the whole world of psychology, philosophy and history, they are under the free man's obligation to see themselves in the common sunlight. That is what makes the difference between the Maxim Gorkys and the "creatures that once were men." It is when the intellectual wing of the I. W. W. begins to produce its Maxim Gorkys that we shall know the dawn has come.

THE LAND OF OIL AND MONEY.

THERE may shortly be a chance of common folk learning the truth about the disastrous and expensive campaigns of the European Allies in Mesopotamia and Persia. That there are several groups of oil companies whose interests are clashing in the East, is well known in Europe. Indeed the whole question of the conduct of the Allied Governments in supporting the claims of these companies may very soon be brought to light in a full-dress debate in the House of Lords. So serious has the question of conquest and military administration in Mesopotamia and Persia become, that Lord Islington has put a series of questions to the British Government and asked for a day to discuss them. The London *Times* brazenly says that it fears the Government dare not tell the truth even if a day is given for such discussion. How can the Government tell the truth when contracts are made with privateering concerns under the ægis of a Foreign Office; contracts which necessitate military action, to be paid for, of course, by the simple-minded taxpayers of the country? It is most unlikely that a Foreign Office would "permit" a Lloyd George or a Millerand to know the nature of the contracts. How then is the truth to be learned? Well, how has the

truth been learned about any secret contracts in connexion with the European catastrophe? So far as can be ascertained, there is not a single record of a Government that has been a party to a secret agreement, confessing voluntarily its complicity. All the nefarious things of this nature that have been brought to light at all, have been exposed by quite other means. It is therefore a quaint criticism on the part of the *London Times*, and the sophisticated reader can no doubt discover between the lines that this is merely one of the Northcliffian stratagems for compromising a government that can not always act as its willing tool. The *Times* does not, of course, come out emphatically with the charge that the British government's policy in Mesopotamia and Persia favours interests of opposition companies. That would not do. The *Times* never spills the beans in that way. It makes its point by attacking the Government's maladministration of the areas within the oil zones. It denounces the broken promises of the Government and says: "If we had kept our pledges of November 1918 renewed in the Turkish peace treaty," the regrettable affrays which have thwarted the Government's plans of conquest would "never have occurred." This from such a source is unique, and the simple-minded taxpayer may be led to believe that the Napoleon of journalism is ready to repent in sackcloth and ashes, and henceforth support a policy of rectitude in connexion with treaty-making.

How little we in this country know of what goes on beyond our shores, may be inferred from the criticism the *London Times* levels against the British Government's policy of "Indianizing" the oil areas. Imagine what the state of affairs must be in this quarrel which is raging among the many syndicates interested in the development of Asian oil-wells and the subjugation of the natives. The *Times* says:

If the Government tell the truth, they will admit that, despite their solemn undertaking just after Turkey surrendered, they have been breaking their pledges to allow the people of Mesopotamia to choose their own form of government. They have given the head of the local civil administration, Colonel Wilson, so much uncontrolled power that he has attempted to 'Indianize' Mesopotamia, apparently without much regard to his superiors. Colonel Wilson, who seems to combine inexhaustible energy with a dangerous tendency to disregard the broader aspects of Imperial policy, has acted as though Great Britain proposes to take permanent possession of Mesopotamia and to keep it under direct British rule. The frequent outbreaks in these areas are to some extent a consequence of his excessive activities. Had we left the people of both Southern and Northern Kurdistan to manage their own affairs, we should probably have had none of the expensive 'punitive' expeditions of the last twelve months. It does not gladden our hearts to learn that, after the deplorable assassination of British officers and armoured-car crews at Tel Afar, a number of Arabs have been killed by way of retaliation.

Probably the *Times* sees a very great danger in making Colonel Wilson in Mesopotamia an official of the type of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, for the execution of such a policy as the latter stood for in India, might bring about consequences more terrible than Amritsar and lead to the most tedious struggle of the century.

One may look a little deeper into this business and find a pretty good reason for the very unusual attitude the *Times* is taking about the oil policy. But first let us keep in mind the methods of the old system which served the interests so well before the European War began, when private concerns exploiting coal, iron, oil, copra, etc., took advantage of the services of men of military and naval experience and distinction and gave them places on their directors' boards. It was

not unusual to find a General here and an Admiral there lending distinction to a body of commercial potentates. With regard to munition companies such as shipbuilders, steel-plate manufacturers, ordnance works, it was quite common to find among the directors not a few soldiers and sailors of the retired list, and indeed the influence exerted by them, and by excivil servants, extended far and wide over the whole field of foreign and colonial affairs. European exploiters scarcely made a territorial move without their advice. With this in mind, it is not difficult to understand the reason for the wail that is sent up by the *London Times* on this question of British administration of the oil areas of the East. It is oil and nothing but oil that concerns it; and apparently the Government is supporting a man picked by interests which the *Times* does not favour.

As to the oil question we trust the Government will give some explanation in regard to the presence, or the recent presence of General Sir John Cowans in Mesopotamia. It is understood that Sir John Cowans is the representative, at a very large salary, of certain oil-interests. On his retirement from the Army he had every right to follow what occupation he pleased; but, at a time when the War Office was still responsible for the control of Mesopotamia, we should have preferred to have seen oil-interests represented in that region by another man than by the distinguished officer who, so recently as last year, was Quartermaster-General of the Forces and a member of the Army Council. We take it for granted that, in his capacity as an oil representative, Sir John Cowans did not journey through Mesopotamia 'in full regimentals,' as has been publicly alleged. An uncomfortable feeling prevails that various Government Departments have been making promises to oil-interests—and to other interests—which may incidentally involve the country in heavy responsibilities and untold expenditure. We trust that Ministers will state frankly what promises they have made. We trust also that the Government will lose no time in framing and in announcing—preferably in agreement with France—a sound and intelligible policy in regard to the Middle East.

Neither Brailsford in his "The War of Steel and Gold," nor Philip Snowden in the revelations of munition-makers' directorships which he laid before the House of Commons, nor Perris in his exposure of the scandalous case of Mulliner and the Coventry Ordnance Works, ever put a case with such brutal candour as this. And it must be remembered that it is the *London Times*, not a British radical journal, that charges General Sir John Cowans with being a representative at a very large salary of certain oil-interests. It is not often that the simple-minded British taxpayer gets much from the *Times* for which he can really return thanks; but he has got something this time. For it may be held to a certainty that the taxpayer is not one of those among whom "an uncomfortable feeling prevails that various Government Departments had been making promises to oil-interests—and to other interests—which may incidentally involve the country in heavy responsibilities and untold expenditure." Hardly; all this is news to him.

"Incidentally involve," is excellent and goes exceedingly well with "untold expenditure." One can not tell, however, what would be the state of affairs if some other man preferred by the *Times* had represented the oil-interests while the War Office was responsible for the control of Mesopotamia; and that is just the interesting question for the taxpayer. What "punitive expeditions," "outbreaks," "affrays," "deplorable assassinations," "Indianizing," "heavy responsibilities," and "untold expenditure" would have occurred under some other man's influence, we can not tell. All we can do is to guess that the *Times's* preferred man would be just about another Colonel Wil-

son, just about another General Sir John Cowans—simply the representative of another set of oil-interests, out to get the very best slice of the Mesopotamian oil cake for his Board of Directors. That's all. Of course the taxpayer may be reduced to tears to think that the Northcliffe interest, whatever it may be, is not getting its share, but he may dry his eyes and raise a feeble smile when he sees the oil-interest gentlemen fall out and blackguard one another for all they are worth. Perhaps the simple-minded taxpayer, having paid so much in blood and treasure for the prosecution and the aims of the oil interests, thinks, now that the mighty civilizers of inferior peoples are quarrelling over the division of the spoil, that imperialism's long day of exploitation, cant, hypocrisy and prevarication, is drawing to a close. Isn't there an old proverb about honest men getting their due when thieves fall out?

REMINISCENCES OF TOLSTOY: IV.

*I include here an unfinished letter written by me under the influence of the "going away" of Leo Nikolaievitch from Yasnaya Polyana, and of his death. I publish the letter just as it was written at the time and without correcting a single word; and I do not finish it, for somehow or other this is not possible:—*MAXIM GORKY.

I HAVE just posted a letter to you—telegrams have arrived telling of "Tolstoy's flight," and now, once more, one with you in thought I write again.

Probably all I want to say about the news will seem to you confused, perhaps even harsh and ill-tempered, but you will forgive me. I am feeling as though I had been gripped by the throat and nearly strangled.

I had many long conversations with him; when he was living at Gaspra in the Crimea I often went to him and he liked coming to me; I have studied his books lovingly; it seems to me that I have the right to say what I think of him even if it be bold and differ widely from the general opinion. I know as well as others that no man is more worthy than he of the name of genius; no one was more complicated, contradictory, and great in everything—yes, in everything. Great, in some curious sense, broad, indefinable by words, there is something in him which made me desire to cry aloud to everyone: "Look what a wonderful man is living on the earth!" For he is, so to say, universally and above all, a man, a man of mankind.

But what always repelled me in him was that stubborn despotic inclination to turn the life of Count Leo Nikolaievitch [Tolstoy] into "the saintly life of our blessed father, boyard Leo."

As you know, he had for long intended to suffer; he expressed his regret to E. Soloviev, and to Suler, that he had not succeeded; but he wanted to suffer simply, not out of a natural desire to test the resistance of his will, but with the obvious and, I repeat, the despotic intention of increasing the influence of his religious ideas, the weight of his teaching, in order to make his preaching irresistible, to make it holy in the eyes of man through his suffering; to force them to accept it—you understand, to force them. For he realized that that preaching is not sufficiently convincing; in his diary you will, some day, read good examples of scepticism applied by him to his own preaching and personality. He knows that "martyrs and sufferers, with rare exceptions, are despots and tyrants"—he knows everything!—and yet he says to himself, "Were I to suffer for my ideas, they would have a greater influence." It was this in him that always repelled me, for I can not help feeling that it was an attempt to use violence upon me, a desire to get hold of my conscience, to dazzle it with the glory of righteous blood, to put upon my neck the yoke of a dogma.

He always greatly exalted immortality on the other side of this life, but he preferred it on this side. A

writer, national in the truest and most complete sense, he embodied in his great soul all the defects of his nation, all the mutilations we have suffered by the ordeals of our history; his misty preaching of "non-activity," of "non-resistance to evil," the doctrine of passivism, all this is the unhealthy ferment of the old Russian blood, envenomed by Mongolian fatalism and almost chemically hostile to the West with its untiring creative labour, with its active and indomitable resistance to the evils of life. What is called Tolstoy's "anarchism," essentially and fundamentally, expresses our Slav anti-stateism, which, again, is really a national characteristic, ingrained in our flesh from old times, our desire to scatter nomadically. Up to now we have indulged that desire passionately, as you and everyone else know. We Russians know it too, but we always break away along the line of least resistance; we see that this is pernicious, but still we crawl further and further away from one another; and these mournful cockroach journeyings are called "the history of Russia," the history of a State which has been established almost incidentally, mechanically—to the surprise of the majority of its honest-minded citizens—by the forces of the Variags, Tartars, Baltic Germans, and petty officials. To their surprise, I say, because all the time we have been "scattering"; and only when we reached places beyond which we could find nothing worse—when we could go no further—well, then we stopped and settled down. This is the destiny to which we are doomed, to settle in the snows and marshes, by the side of the wild Erza, Tchood, Mervey, Vess and Muroma.

Yet men arose among us who realized that light must come to us not from the East but from the West, and now he, Leo Nikolaievitch, the crown of our ancient history, wishes, consciously or unconsciously, to stretch himself like a vast mountain across our nation's path to Europe, to the active life which sternly demands of men the supreme effort of their spiritual forces. His attitude towards science, too, is certainly national; one sees magnificently reflected in him the old, Russian village-scepticism which comes from ignorance. Everything is national in him and all his preaching is a reaction from the past, an atavism which we had already begun to shake off and overcome.

Think of his letter "The Intelligentsia, the State, the People" written in 1905—what a pernicious, malignant thing it is! You can hear in it the sectarian's: "I told you so." I wrote an answer to him at the time, based on his own words to me, that he had long since forfeited the right to speak of and on behalf of the Russian people; for I am a witness of his lack of desire to listen to and understand the people who came to talk to him soul to soul. My letter was bitter, and in the end I did not send it to him.

Well, now he is probably making his last assault in order to give to his ideas the highest possible significance. Like Vassily Buslayer, he usually loved these assaults, but always so that he might assert his holiness and obtain a halo. That is dictatorial, although his teaching is justified by the ancient history of Russia and by his own sufferings of genius. Holiness is attained by flirting with sin, by subduing the will to live. People do desire to live, but he tries to persuade them: "That's all nonsense, our earthly life." It is very easy to persuade a Russian of this; he is a lazy creature who loves beyond anything else to find an excuse for his own inactivity. On the whole, of course, a Russian is not a Platon Karatayev, nor an Akim, nor a Bezonkhy, nor a Neklyudov; all these men were created by history and nature, not exactly on Tolstoy's pattern, he only improved on them in order more thoroughly to support his teaching. But, undeniably, Russia as a whole is—Tiulin above and Oblomov below. For the Tiulin above look at the year 1905, and for the Oblomov below look at Count A. N. Tolstoy, at Bunin, at every one about you. Beasts and swindlers—we can leave them out of consideration, though our beast is exceedingly national

(what a filthy coward he is, for all his cruelty); swindlers, of course, are international.

In Nikolaievitch there is much which at times roused in me a feeling very like hatred, and this hatred fell upon my soul with crushing weight. His disproportionately overgrown individuality is a monstrous phenomenon, almost ugly, and there is in him something of Sviatogor, the bogatyr,¹ whom the earth can't hold. Yes, he is great. I am deeply convinced that beyond all that he speaks of, there is much which he is silent about, even in his diary; he is silent and probably will never tell it to anyone. That "something" only occasionally and in hints slipped through into his conversation, and hints of it are also to be found in the two note-books of his diary which he gave me and L. A. Sulerzhizky to read; it seems to me a kind of "negation of all affirmations," the deepest and most evil nihilism which has sprung from the soil of an infinite and unrelieved despair, from a loneliness which probably no one but he has experienced with such terrifying clearness. I have often thought him to be a man who in the depths of his soul is stubbornly indifferent to people; he is so much above and beyond them that they seem to him like midges and their activities ridiculous and miserable. He has gone too far away from them into some desert; and there, solitary, with the highest effort of all the force of his spirit, he closely examines into "the most essential," into death.

All his life he feared and hated death, all his life there throbbed in his soul the "Arsamaxian terror"—must he die? The whole world, all the earth looks towards him; from China, India, America, from everywhere living, throbbing threads stretch out to him; his soul is for all and for ever. Why should not nature make an exception to her law, give to one man physical immortality? Why not? He is certainly too rational and sensible to believe in miracles, but on the other hand he is a bogatyr, an explorer; and, like a young recruit, wild and headstrong from fear, and despair in fact, of the unknown barrack. I remember, in Gaspra he read Leo Shestov's book "Good and Evil in the Teaching of Nietzsche and Tolstoy," and, when Anton Chekhov remarked that he did not like the book, Tolstoy said: "I thought it amusing. It's written swaggeringly, but it's all right and interesting. I'm sure I like cynics when they are sincere." Then he said: "Truth is not wanted; quite true, what should he want truth for? For he will die all the same."

And evidently seeing that his words had not been understood, he added with a quick smile: "If a man has learnt to think, no matter what he may think about, he is always thinking of his own death. All philosophers were like that. And what truths can there be, if there is death?"

He went on to say that truth is the same for all—love of God. But on this subject he spoke coldly and wearily. After lunch on the terrace he took up Shestov's book again and finding the passage: "Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche could not live without an answer to their questions, and for them any answer was better than none," he laughed and said: "What a daring *coiffeur*, he says straight out that I deceived myself, and that means that I deceived others too. That is the obvious conclusion. . ."

"Why *coiffeur*?" asked Suler.

"Well," he answered thoughtfully, "it just came into my mind that he is fashionable, *chic*, and I remembered the *coiffeur* from Moscow at a wedding of his peasant uncle in the village. He has the finest manners and he dances fashionably, and so he despises everyone."

I repeat this conversation, I think, almost literally; it is most memorable for me, and I even wrote it down at the time as I did many other things which struck me. Sulerzhizky and I wrote down many things which Tolstoy said, but Suler lost his notes when he came to me at Arsamax; he was habitually careless and although he loved Leo Nikolaievitch like a woman, he behaved towards him rather strangely, almost like a superior. I have also mis-

laid my notes somewhere and can not find them; some one in Russia must have got them. I watched Tolstoy very attentively, because I was looking for—I am still looking for and will until my death—a man with an active and a living faith. And also because once Anton Chekhov, speaking of our lack of culture, complained: "Goethe's words were all recorded, but Tolstoy's are being lost in the air. That, my dear fellow, is intolerably Russian. After his death they will all bestir themselves, will begin to write reminiscences, and will lie."

But to return to Shestov. "It is impossible," he says, "to live looking at horrible ghosts, but how does he know whether it's horrible or not? If he knew, if he saw ghosts, he would not write this nonsense, but would do something serious, what Buddha did all his life."

Some one remarked that Shestov was a Jew.

"Hardly," said Leo Nikolaievitch doubtfully. "No, he is not like a Jew; there are no disbelieving Jews, you can't name one . . . no."

It seemed sometimes as though this old sorcerer were playing with death, coquetting with her, trying somehow to deceive her, saying: "I am not afraid of thee, I love thee, I long for thee," and, at the same time, peering at death with his keen little eyes: "What art thou like? What follows thee hereafter? Wilt thou destroy me altogether, or will something in me go on living?"

A strange impression used to be produced by his words: "I am happy, I am very happy, I am too happy." And then immediately afterwards: "To suffer." To suffer—that too was true in him, I don't doubt it for a second, that he, only half convalescent, would have been really glad to be put into prison, to be banished, in a word to embrace a martyr's crown. Would not martyrdom probably in some measure justify death, make her more understandable, acceptable, from the external, from the formal point of view? But he was never happy, never and nowhere, I am certain of that: neither "in the books of wisdom," nor "on the back of a horse," nor "in the arms of a woman" did he experience the full delights of "earthly paradise." He is too rational for that and knows life and people too well. Here are some more of his words: "The Kaliph Abdurahman had during his life fourteen happy days, but I am sure I have not had so many. And this is because I have never lived—I can not live—for myself, for my own self; I live for show, for people."

When we left, Anton Chekhov said to me: "I don't believe that he was never happy." But I believe it. He was not. Though it is not true that he lived for show. Yes, what he himself did not need, he gave to people as though they were beggars; he liked to compel them, to compel them to read, walk, be vegetarians, love the peasants, and believe in the infallibility of the rational-religious reflections of Leo Tolstoy. People must be given something which will either satisfy or amuse them, and then let them be off. Let them leave a man in peace, to his habitual, tormenting, and sometimes cosy loneliness, facing the bottomless pit of the problem of "the essential."

All Russian preachers, with the exception of Avvakum and perhaps Tikhon Zadonsky, are cold men, for they did not possess an active and living faith. When I was writing *Luka* in "The Lower Depths," I wanted to describe an old man like that: he is interested in "every solution" but not in people; coming inevitably in contact with them, he consoles them, but only in order that they may leave him in peace. And all the philosophy, all the preaching of such men is alms bestowed by them with a veiled aversion, and there sounds behind their preaching words which are beggarly and melancholy: "Get out! Love God or your neighbour, but get out! Curse God, love the stranger, but leave me alone! Leave me alone, for I am a man and I am doomed to death."

Alas, so it is, and so it will be. It could not and can not be otherwise, for men have become worn out, exhausted, terribly separated, and they are all chained to a loneliness which dries up the soul. If Leo Nikolaievitch

¹A hero in Russian legend, brave but wild and self-willed, like a child.

had had a reconciliation with the Church, it would not have at all surprised me. The thing would have had a logic of its own; all men are equally insignificant, even archbishops. In fact, it would not have been a reconciliation, strictly speaking; for him personally the act would have been only logical: "I forgive those who hate me." It would have been a Christian act, and behind it there would have hidden a quick, ironical little smile, which would be understood as the way in which a wise man retaliates on the fools.

What I write is not what I want to say; I can not express it properly. There is a dog howling in my soul, and I have a foreboding of some misfortune. Yes, newspapers have just arrived and it is already clear: you at home are beginning to "create a legend"; idlers and good-for-nothings have gone on living and have now produced a saint. Only think how pernicious it is for the country just at this moment, when the heads of disillusioned men are bowed down, the souls of the majority empty, and the souls of the best full of sorrow. Lacerated and starving they long for a legend. They long so much for alleviation of pain, for the soothing of torment. And they will create just what he desires, but what is not wanted—the life of a holy man and saint.

But surely he is great and holy because he is a man, a madly and tormentingly beautiful man; a man of the whole of mankind. I am somehow contradicting myself in this, but it does not matter. He is a man seeking God, not for himself, but for men, so that God may leave him, the man, alone in the peace of the desert chosen by him. He gave us the Gospels in order that we might forget the contradictions in Christ; he simplified Christ's image, smoothing away the militant elements and bringing into the foreground the humble "will of Him that sent him." No doubt Tolstoy's gospel is the more easily accepted because it is "soothing to the malady" of the Russian people. He had to give them something, for they complain and trouble the earth with their groaning, and distract him from "the essentials." But "War and Peace" and all the other things of the same kind will not soothe the sorrow and despair of the grey Russian land. Of "War and Peace" he himself said: "Without false modesty, it is like the *Iliad*." N. Y. Tchaikovsky heard from his lips exactly the same appreciation of "Childhood and Youth."

Journalists have just arrived from Naples; one even hurried from Rome. They ask me to say what I think of Tolstoy's "flight"—"flight" is the word they use. I would not talk to them. You, of course, understand that inwardly I am terribly disturbed: I do not want to see Tolstoy a saint; let him remain a sinner close to the heart of the all-sinful world, even close to the heart of each one of us. Pushkin and he—there is nothing more sublime or dearer to us.

MAXIM GORKY.

THE SATIRIST IN VACUO.

My friendship with Ambrose Bierce dates from the time when I was sixteen and he about fifty. After long years of friendship we finally quarrelled, about practically nothing—as Bierce was fated in the end to quarrel with all his friends, yes, even with his most devout worshipper and panegyrist. From all whom he admitted within his narrow circle he exacted an intellectual subjection that was autocratic and utterly Johnsonian—and quite at variance with his own Luciferian pride of spirit.

Bierce's *Weltanschauung* was one of serene and stoic pessimism, a curious, half-humorous acceptance of life's farcicality, meanness and madness—to which, like Schopenhauer, he was not ungrateful because they furnished him with such excellent themes and expedients for exploiting his gift for satire. Bierce was a misanthrope, and yet he was not cynical in the sense in which the writer of the excellent article in the *Freeman* of 21 April regards him. He was saved

from the sterility and the superficiality of the true cynic by the tragic undercurrents of his nature. Despite his apparent cold and lofty disdain, his contempt and even loathing for the human animal, he still retained the capacity to suffer and to suffer poignantly—and not always in secret. He was still able to grieve with sorrow, and to sympathize with suffering, though ever on his guard against encroachments of his heart upon his head.

His imagination has been called brutal—in his short stories he delighted in enacting the part of a remorseless and diabolical destiny involving his puppets in terrible dilemmas, then studying their contortions curiously through the lens of an art which had become objective to the point of the inhumane. In spite of this relentlessness, Bierce was touched with sentiment, even tortured with a lyrical melancholy and Wertherian *Weltschmerz* which sometimes subdued him to poetry. Who would believe that those lines "To Nanine" were written by the same hand that wrote "Chickamauga"?

Sympathy and assistance, too, he, the old and dis-appointed writer, gave generously to the young and promising. Yet his censure and condemnation fell thickly and pitilessly upon all those whom he considered imposters or incapables, big and little, in the field of politics or the field of poetry. This, in an environment that loathed satire and criticism for mere reasons of self-protection, brought him a black and sinister reputation.

The remarkable portrait of which the writer in the *Freeman* speaks, was taken by me in Bierce's bungalow during one of my frequent visits to Wrights in the Santa Cruz Mountains, south of San Francisco. Here Bierce was leading a comfortable, semi-eremitic life, writing his brilliant weekly "Prattle" for the San Francisco *Examiner* and "wearing-out" the climate with his asthma. The skull which grins sardonically in this picture was something of a literary affectation of Bierce's and was tolerated upon his writing-table chiefly for decorative purposes. He was certain that it was the skull of a woman—since "the lower jaw was missing."

In his imaginative work Bierce gravitated towards the gruesome and *macabre*. But this was not from an inherent morbidity so much as from a superabundant vitality and nimbleness of fancy which felt that they must veil themselves in a romantic gloom. Bierce also felt a strong literary loyalty to Poe's world and to the gloom of Byronic Manfredism—partly as a challenge and offset to the blithe and bounding optimism of everybody and everything about him. A healthy and direct man, he loved to dally with thoughts of doom, and some of his descriptions in prose and verse are mere transmutations of certain sombre landscapes of Doré's—"in which one feels that something is just about to happen."

His pessimistic interpretation of life was tempered and spiced by a fastidious epicurean practice and galantry and bristled with many punctilios drawn from the code of the gentleman and soldier of a past generation. He had assumed during his short stay in England, many English, even Tory externals. Thus, he once told me that his ideal of beautiful old age in men was a pink face with silver hair—a contrast which he lived to achieve. He was fond of French cookery and would make occasional pilgrimages from his place "Valhalla"—so named in derision of the names some of his neighbours gave their country homes—to indulge his taste in San Francisco. Though himself usually a temperate man, he was a believer in the

alcoholic tradition and in Omar Khayyâm before Omar Khayyâm became a cult. As a token of remembrance he once gave me a handsome silver whiskey flask. "It is a souvenir," he exclaimed solemnly in his sweet, rather high voice, "of a girl who is now no more—to me."

Bierce had the faculty, sharpened by practice in the London school of wits, of seizing swiftly and surely the humorous aspect of things, and presenting this with an aphoristic form and finish. One of the most perfect epigrams in the English language is his: "How beautiful it would be if we might fall into the arms of women without falling into their hands."

The writer of the *Freeman* article errs, however, in assuming that Bierce was a Southerner. He was born in Ohio in 1842. He served in the Engineer Corps of the Union forces during the Civil War, and attained the rank of major. The legend of his being a Southerner arose in part from the old-school grace and courtesy of his manner, the soft inflections of his voice—in part from all lack of sectional patriotism in his stories of the Civil War. This volume of masterpieces, having been refused by all the prominent publishers in the United States, finally saw the light through the friendly offices of Mr. E. L. G. Steele, a merchant of San Francisco. Its first title was "Tales of Soldiers and Civilians." Since then under the title of "In the Midst of Life" it has worked itself towards enduring fame by one edition after another.

There was another stubborn fiction which prevailed in the Far West—namely that Bierce was an Englishman. This arose from his precise use of pure English in speaking and writing, and from certain mannerisms of voice, dress and expression. This Queen's English he had also acquired during the two or three years which he spent in London during the early '70's. There Bierce became one of a shining coterie of Victorian wits, writers for the weeklies, frequenters of the old Mitre Tavern, rakish young literary freebooters and intellectuals of the day—among them George William Curtis, Tom Hood the Younger, George R. Sims, George Augustus Sala. With Tom Hood the Younger, Bierce published London *Fun*, a ribald and diabolical antidote to *Punch*. Bierce's satanic humour, full of Western unexpectedness, freshness and fierce drollery, earned him great distinction in these circles. His gift of ruthless satire brought him an offer from the ex-Empress Eugénie, who was smouldering with fury and feminine venom in her exile in London. Bierce was to publish an English counterblast to the *Laterne* of her bitter arch-enemy, Henri Rochefort. This project, however, remained a project.

Bierce's first books were published in London. They were full of an effervescent and fantastic diablerie, insolent gamin wit and irreverence. Upon the title page of "The Fiend's Delight" (invariably, to its author's annoyance, mentioned as "The Friend's Delight") there was a vignette—a genial Pickwickian figure, comfortably toasting a naked baby over a fire with a pair of tongs—beneath it the moralistic distich:

Count that day lost whose low-descending sun
Views from thy hand no virtuous action done.

"Cobwebs from an Empty Skull" and "Nuggets and Dust" were also published in London—all three of these youthful works appearing under the name of Dod Grile.

It is also an error to assume that Bierce held verse in contempt. True, he detested and flayed pitilessly the pretentious poetaster, but poetry was to him a

hallowed thing and good verse he held in high respect. To him poetry was the noblest, most exalted fruit of the human imagination, the great poet a king of men. His own longing to achieve a reputation as a poet had in it something almost wistful.

Another error that cries for correction is that Ambrose Bierce's satires and lampoons were "one long hymn of hate." His own theory of satire was based upon the principle that rogues and fools were the legitimate prey of the satirist, that it was in fact not only his prerogative but also his duty to mock at and punish them. Here Pope's "Dunciad" became his norm. Many of his victims, it was said, were small deer, insignificant fry, unworthy the flashing, two-handed broadsword of his wit. But to Bierce the theme and the intrinsic merit of the satire were everything, and the person often nothing, or a mere peg or pole upon which he might set his satire flying like a flag. Yet when he spoke as a moralist then the person meant everything to him. The familiar dogma that one should lash the sin and spare the sinner he violated deliberately. To him the sin was only an abstraction—to excoriate it was like shooting arrows into the blue, it was the man, the sinner whose withers he longed to wring, whose blood he wished to draw.

How little this strange literary phenomenon in American literature was understood even by discerning professional critics is seen in an amusing and imaginative sketch by Benjamin de Casseres in a recent *Smart Set*. In this Bierce is made to talk slang—which he loathed above all things in the world. He is made to eulogize the rebel against vested authority—Bierce was by conviction and temperament an aristocrat, an upholder of authority, even with "whiffs of grape-shot." He is finally represented by M. de Casseres as a member of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco. Bierce, who resigned in anger and disgust from that institution in the early '80's, would surely turn in the hot Mexican earth in which they buried him, if this could reach his ears.

Several points in the story of how Ambrose Bierce came to his death, as given by Mr. James H. Wilkins, incite to investigation—as Bierce himself might have said. Bierce may be, probably is, dead. It is even probable that he died in the manner described—by the rifle-bullets of Villa's firing-squad. Were it so, he would in his last moments have found himself in precisely the same position as one of the most original and captivating characters in his short stories—"Parker Addison, Philosopher." Yet it is certain that Bierce faced death more stoically than that renegade to his own boast. Bierce, too, was Roman enough to die, if need be, by his own hand, and with him the need may have been one with the will, with the conviction of its seemliness or expediency.

And yet it is possible that Ambrose Bierce is not dead. He had often confessed to me his ardent, essentially romantic wish to drop out of life for a number of years, to lie low until a rascal world had had its say of him, until a more dispassionate criticism had done him justice. Then he was to return to confute the detractors, to enjoy his fame, or to laugh at both. But against this theory that the Californian Olympian might still be living in some tellurian Limbo and, Asmodeus-like, peering beneath the brain-pans of a forgetful world for some cabalistic sign of its appreciation of his work, militates his own inexorable logic, his humour, his honour and what he called the fitness of things. A mind so clear as his would have foreseen that his eventual recrudescence might be converted into a fiasco, an anti-climax making his real

death ridiculous, merely by the scurril world refusing to occupy itself posthumously with the question of his real place in literature. This has actually been the case. Bierce being doomed to keep the pact with himself, can not therefore, even if he might, "return."

The full height and measure of Bierce's greatness as one of the most original and interesting of the literary apparitions of our mollusc-like and Philistine civilization, will be established by a future and not by the present generation—perhaps, as in the case of Whitman, by Europe and not by America. In this satirist of the New World there were in addition to his own aboriginality, elements that were clearly derivative, even atavistic in a literary sense. Swift, Pope, Voltaire, Heine, and Poe—these five great spirits were all called to the cradle of this anomaly of the American Pantheon. No anthology will enshrine him, no Jobbers' Hall of Fame defile itself with his sibilant and aggressive name.

The tragedy of his seeming futility pursued him. A sumptuous, but badly-edited "complete" or is it "collected" edition of his work was reared about him in his old age. But under his life's work this sardonic spirit did not write "finis," but "minus"—and then went forth alone into the wilderness to seek the final solution. He was a bold swimmer against the stream of human stupidity, a lover of man, but a contemner of men. Nietzsche, whom he did not know, would have set him among his lesser Supermen. He was equipped with noble natural gifts and wisdom, but hampered by insufficient culture. He burned a thousand brilliant Bengal matches of wit and satire, but did not, alas, create a single satiric work of breadth or depth, in comment upon, or in condemnation of his kind or his age.

Had Bierce lived and written in England, France or Germany, he would have achieved his full spiritual stature. In an older community his predestined mission as a satirist would have brought his name great resonance and lustre. In America he was as a lion in a vast squirrel-cage, a Gulliver held down by a thousand threads of public hostility, indifference and ignorance. He was a writer magnificently male and militant in a land of triumphant feminism. His irony and sarcasm were salt and acid to the national sensitiveness, his logical and objective intellect was in eternal revolt against seas and mountain-ranges of inconsequence and folly.

In his wise he was a prophet, and a tragic one, coming with the thin Sybilline books of his satire to a self-sufficient people that winced and writhed under his censure and regarded him, not as its critical conscience, but as Beelzebub and the Spirit that Denies. And yet no land and no people needed him—incorruptible thinker and skilled, satirical surgeon that he was—so much as precisely our own.

HERMAN GEORGE SCHEFFAUER.

THE NAIVETE OF LIBERALISM.

ALMOST everyone who reads these words, whether engaged in industry, art or the professions, has his thinking stringently conditioned by his circumstances. All alike, because of associations or early environment and training, are dominated, liberals no less than conservatives, by the old instincts and the old pressures—all alike are forced to accept the prevailing hypocrisy of civilization.

In a society growing ever more complex through mental growth and power over things, this hypocrisy is the product of fear and of lust for power and pos-

sessions. Our egoism controls us; and our arrogance, which is but conscious or discovered egoism, decreases as our hypocrisy, especially of the naïve kind, grows. It is, as it were, a refinement of the baser metal. So it comes to be, that respect for our fellows wars with our lust for power. Our material lusts may find satiation, but our psychic lusts are insatiable. We seek satisfaction beyond our physical needs. These secondary instincts being more cruel and infinitely more subtle than the primal, the result can have been no other than hypocrisy.

Under our struggle for outlets and fulfilment, our hypocrisy, reaching its supreme height, has permitted us to secure, within the moral code, power and safety and the rich rewards of effort; while at the same time we are devoting our conscious energies to the good, the true, and the beautiful. It is this insidious element in the evolution of popular ethics which is now more than ever before driving the liberal on in a maze of religion, patriotism, philanthropy, welfare-work, political and social reform.

In the liberal, the intellectual emotionalist, we may realize how the instinct for safety-first survives in the continuing succour he brings to the class he criticizes, the class that really keeps him, and, what is more, the class which uses him and his endeavours, reforms, ameliorations, and uses them all for the blinding and confusion of the masses. Meanwhile, the liberal with goodwill, sophistication, and reason, strives for remedies for the manifest evils of the society in which he lives. Construction by trial and error is his method, he assures us. Not for him that radicalism which overthrows law and order. The liberal, standing strong for law and order, offers calmly and betimes passionately, his plans for the reform of a system which his own scientists have proven is wasteful and inefficient, to say nothing of its being unjust.

Thus, in this day of defeat, the liberal, more than others, stands in need of self-understanding. He dare not measure himself and his attitude with a courageous eye. The radical, just because he is a radical, is free from much of the unconsciously obstructive temper of the liberal; there is at work in him a mechanism of desire and outlet just as obvious and just as egoistic as in the liberal, but in the radical it is based largely on his belonging to the "have-nots" instead of to the "haves."

Those who, like Professor Dewey and other humanized dispassionates, know most about liberal modes of thinking and feeling, are largely responsible for the continuing *naïveté* and futility of their kind. But the night has passed; the light has dawned. The passions have been yielded to rather longer than is decent. The pose of open-mindedness and tolerance has blinded the liberal-idealist to his peculiar liability to be more cautious than courageous, more "constructive" than scientific; and has completely hidden from him the enemy within. For the liberal too hath his own "Red" to deal with, just like any rock-bound land of liberty. For him the ever-present danger is that his every instinct fights against his creed. To awake to the full knowledge of this may make for fatalism; but by bravely facing the facts, the liberal may win through to sincerity and right adjustments. But, alas, the liberal likes to start at the middle of his journey, disdaining the hard road over which all must travel before the goal is reached.

It is an arresting question to ask what real advance has liberalism achieved for the people, what advance has it won that would not have been won by the blind, resentful masses without any such liberal help. It is

no answer to point to the work of the reformers of the past century; for the question still remains how far those reforms advanced the real and not the apparent welfare of the people. Whatever the liberal may have done to secure such ameliorations as workmen's compensation, mothers' pensions, free hospitals, and similar betterments for the working-classes, these workers to this day remain essentially enslaved. Could not the workers alone by organization and rebellion have gained as much? But even if credit for these gains be conceded to the liberal, what is there in them after all for pride? Have they not merely subserved in the end the uses of the exploiters?

Consider the careful going of all economists and sociologists in the jungle of present-day conditions; consider the careful approach of all liberals to the problem of Russia; and consider the programme of the League of Free Nations Association, with its long array of liberal thinkers, offering us as a constructive plan what is after all merely a careful expedient, with the plea that "a bold act of political faith in the League will justify itself by making the League a success; but equally lack of faith will justify itself by ruining the League." Here we may see the emotionalist turned salvationist! Hear him as he implores us to join his obviously ameliorative organization. The roots of war are ignored; and a specious plan of evasion—highly characteristic of the liberal mind—is devised, based on an international system that these same sponsors of a League of Free Nations know to be fundamentally rotten.

Preoccupation with the ends he seeks to attain, his attempt to make a synthesis without any previous analysis, his refusal to act as courageously as he thinks, his simple-minded avoidance of natural human instincts—these are some of the counts in the indictment of liberalism. Self-appraisal from the psychological standpoint is the great need of the day for us all. Despair may well be expected for many under any such analysis, for self-respect is involved in the matter. But in the end there may be discovered in the liberal, latent powers that will bring us all the first milestone on the road to life, liberty and happiness. In fine, liberalism must free itself from its simple-minded hypocrisy. Until it does so, it can offer no impelling programme of ideals.

L. J. EDDY.

AN ETHNOLOGIST'S MEMORIES.

A FEW years ago, on presenting myself at the polls early on Election Day, I was amazed to find myself peremptorily challenged as to my right to vote. To be sure I had only recently moved into the neighbourhood, yet my change of residence lay several days on the safe side of the legal requirements, and I had encountered no difficulty at the time of registering. To this day the reason for the challenge remains a dark secret, but it has nothing to do with my tale. Confident in my rights, I offered to swear in my vote. When they had discovered that such was my inalienable privilege, the board proceeded upon a searching biographical examination. My height, weight, intentions as to future residence, previous convictions for felony, etc., etc., were all duly recorded till at last came the deadly question, "What is your occupation?" In the innocence of my heart I truthfully replied, "I am an ethnologist." The effect was staggering. The clerk threw up his hands in despair and looking appealingly at the chairman remarked, "I hope *you* gentlemen know what this man does for a living. I don't." A little improvised extension course followed, and when it was found out that I was connected with a public institution I was permitted to vote amidst a profusion of apologies.

Now here comes an unexpected sequel. The following summer I was visiting an unfamiliar part of the Crow Indian Reservation out in Nevada. One evening I strolled about the dance-house waiting for an entertainment which had been announced for that night, when a young Indian of engaging manners struck up an acquaintance with me. He spoke English fairly well, for though never more than a few miles from the Reservation he had been to school with the Catholic priests at the Mission. After a few preliminary inquiries he asked what I was doing there among his people. That, of course, seemed no easy thing to explain off-hand to an Indian but I recalled the elementary principles of pedagogy; from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract! "I am here," I answered, "to see how the women dress hides and put up a lodge. When there is a dance, I want to note everything about it; and when nothing in particular is happening I like to talk to the old men and get them to tell me how they danced and fought and hunted buffalo in the old days before you were born. I want to . . ." But my savage friend interrupted the flow of my eloquence. "Oh, I see," he said, "you're an ethnologist!"

ONE winter I received a lugubrious letter from my favourite Indian interpreter, Jim. It was written from the Billings County Jail. Jim, it seemed, had smuggled some whiskey in to the Reservation and when caught in the act had assaulted the deputy sheriff; hence his pains and penalties. He was ordered to spend two months in jail and pay a fine of a hundred dollars. He soon found it very boring in prison, especially since he was short of reading matter. Wouldn't I please send him sixty dollars, he wrote, and one of my Indian monographs, and a copy of an interesting book he had once seen many years ago called, as he remembered, "Hell Up-to-date"? By way of reply I sent him twenty dollars and the monograph, and asked for further particulars as to "Hell Up-to-date." The name of the author? Or that of the publisher at least? Jim's response came in due time with many expressions of gratitude, but he could not by any means recall the author of the desired book, but the publisher, he thought, was the International News Company. However, if I could not get "Hell Up-to-date," I was to send the "Life of Napoleon the Great." Somehow Jim's note made me feel that I was a dull fellow not to have divined that the "Life of Napoleon" was the only possible alternative. Inquiry proved that the International News Company had never heard of "Hell Up-to-date," nor had any other publisher in New York, nor had any of the second-hand dealers I approached; so in the end I sent "Napoleon" out to the Billings County Jail.

A year or two later I was talking with Jim one evening, and he grew reminiscent. "Too bad," he said, "you couldn't get me that book. 'Hell Up-to-date.' I saw it years ago and it had some fine pictures in it." Whereupon he began to describe some of the illustrations. And suddenly the light began to dawn. Great, unwieldy tomes embellished with lurid sketches rose before my mind's eye with the name of Gustave Doré as the artist's. "Do you," I ejaculated, "by any chance mean Dante's 'Inferno'?" And Jim said joyfully, "Yes, that's it, Dante was the man's name!"

ON an Indian reservation in Montana there lives a quarter-breed who without much schooling has acquired a very tolerable education through omnivorous reading. One winter Joe was seized with a mania for spiritism. He attended séances in neighbouring towns, read up all the relevant articles in an antediluvian edition of the "Encyclopedia Britannica," and began to hold spiritistic sessions of his own to the delight of many of the Indians, who still felt the old urge for communication with the supernatural powers. When I came to the Reservation that summer, Joe at once invited me to attend one of his séances and I readily accepted. On the evening chosen for the affair five of us assembled in his little shanty, Joe and his wife, his foster-brother George and his wife,

and myself. We put our hands on a little round table, and sure enough after a short time the table began to tilt and finally to walk a few inches. Rappings too were soon audible. But the spectacular doings my host had promised somehow failed to make their appearance. Finally Joe declared he was at least going to make the spirits declare their sex: hereafter one rap was to signify a male and two raps a female spirit. Having thus laid down the code to these visitors from the realms of the supernatural who might be present, he asked, "Are you a male or a female?" Two raps came in response. Then before anyone else could say a word, Joe's wife burst out triumphantly: "It's Alexander Upshaw, he always lied!"

ROBERT H. LOWIE.

AN INTERLUDE.

THE whole land is one tricolour blaze this Whitsuntide.

As I pedalled along the hilly road from Dublin I wondered whether it was worth while to persevere. High, jail-like walls towered over me on both sides, shutting out from the humble traveller all they can of sunlight and green shade. A glimpse through a door—for once left open—gave sight of a grassy lawn, bright flowers, and trees, and of a field beyond with a brown cow and a few lambs; then walls again and more walls—grim fortifications that hold back from the man of no property even a sight of nature's beauties.

A motor car rushed by, fouling the air, and coating my damp face with dust—never mind, the dust is Irish dust and can be borne. Down a hill, and round a corner and there, across the road, nature flings defiance at our enemies, hanging out her floral tricolour of green and white and gold—green leaves, white-thorn and laburnum. High above me the glorious banner flutters in the dappled sunlight.

Then out into the open country at last. Little white cottages, and golden gorse sprinkled everywhere over the green fields—again the colours that quicken the pulse of every true-hearted soul in Ireland to-day—while far away the Dublin mountains lie soft against the horizon. From their summit the Three Rocks look out to seawards. Cold, hard and immovable they keep their watch. Through how many long centuries have they looked down on galleon and pinnace, three-decker and modern dreadnaught being borne on the tide into Dublin Bay, and pouring in on the wharves their loads of conquerors and tyrants? In the dawn of history these ancient stones saw the coming of the first war-canoes that paddled into Dublin Bay; the vanguard of an endless stream of sorrow that was to flow in upon the land beneath them. Worn and weather-beaten through the centuries they watched one Easter week the English gunboat that came to pour fire and ruin upon the devoted little band in the Dublin Post Office. In happier days to come these Three Rocks, ever immovable and calm, will stand sentinel there over Ireland's peace, long, long after the iron might of the stranger is broken and red with rust.

Even to-day peace is the key-note of all the landscape before me. Slow curving lines of hills almost melt into each other, so soft and delicate are the tones that mark each receding slope. Distinct against a background of coloured light glimmers the shadowy blue of the far horizon. Mauves, purples and brown enrich all the nearer hills. The cottages set in golden gorse and the green pastures blend softly in this magical air that is Ireland's.

I push slowly on, up the hill to Doyle's pavilion, "The Lamb," where friends and tea await me. Here are pleasant comrades, young and old, Republicans all, taking a holiday on the mountain side. Gaelic Leaguers, Sinn Feiners, Volunteers, a bright, happy crowd, telling of all the news of the past week—the doings of north, south, east and west. Presently some children come with trophies—the remains of a captured electrical machine—and telling of some nearby rifle range that had lately been destroyed in anticipation of the coming of the enemy's troops.

Later on a few of us wandered out onto the mountain side. Among the golden gorse a white path climbed its prickly way upwards; two magpies courted each other from bush to bush; and a skylark rose into the blue heaven to greet us with a song of freedom. We stood a while on a great stone and looked down over the plain. With the cool of the evening a mist was creeping in from the sea. Wave after wave it rolled up through the valleys, shrouding their depths in mystery. Here and there a hilltop or a group of trees stood out clear like magic islands, while the whole country, with Dublin at its heart, lay beneath the gray fog like a fairy kingdom

breathed on by the Seagod and hidden from human eyes, like the "round towers of other days" that the fishermen of Lough Neagh get glimpses of when the moon is full.

But now the sun is setting and the enchantment wanes. Slowly the dream sea ebbs and shrinks away and we can see the familiar country once more. It is time for us to be moving.

Down the hills we speed toward the plain, down by the dew-drenched hedges and damp fields. A few homes, a chapel, public-house and police barracks, there it is, the usual little lonely Irish village. At the barracks we stopped awhile to look at the blackened ruin. We climbed on to the high wall at the back and sat there looking at another of these "tombstones of England's power," as some one has aptly called these roofless walls with their empty windows that mark freedom's progress all over Ireland to-day. I chatted with some of the girls of the village. They had been very much frightened by the attack but, "God's blessing is with the volunteers to-day," they said, "and the country is well rid of the police."

Taking a last look through the empty windows I saw where the molten glass had poured down on the ledges, and I picked up little nuggets all opalescent and shining, mixed in with mortar and sand—then full speed back to town, but not before we had raided the meadows and hedges for buttercups and hawthorne to make big republican posies to tie onto the handlebars of our bicycles.

CONSTANCE, COUNTESS MARKIEWIECZ.

THE THEATRE.

MISS GLASPELL'S PLAYS.

NOT long ago an interviewer proved intent on making me say that the American drama just now is worse than ever. I refused to be drawn. Constitutionally I am averse to sweeping negative statements. But the chief cause of my reserve was that, honestly, I could neither assent nor contradict.

He set me thinking, however. What is the state of the American drama to-day? The only result I can reach is negative. How can I tell? How can anybody tell?

In Europe a play must be pretty bad not to be produced or published, or both. There is less resistance on account of political or social views. The field is so much smaller, too. Over there everybody having anything to do with matters literary and artistic seems to know about everything that might possibly concern them. Therefore, in talking of the English or the French or the Scandinavian drama, one knows pretty well what there is to be reckoned with. But here . . .

We stage plays by the thousand, but how many more rest unknown in the desk-drawers of their creators? Out of those produced, how many reach publication, so that they may become known to the millions who can not get to the theatres? Of those published with or without production, how many are actually read by a sufficient number of people to create a public opinion about them? And finally, out of those produced but not published, how many appear in the form originally designed by their writers?

All these questions recurred to me when I picked up Susan Glaspell's volume of plays.¹ Here is a little body of work—far too small to suit me, for one—that seems to prove us less poor than is generally thought. I have been excited by Miss Glaspell's dramatic work ever since my first view of one of her plays. It was "Close the Book." As the curtain dropped I exclaimed: "An American Shaw—but quite original!" Gradually I saw most of the plays performed by the Provincetown Players, as a rule with the playwright herself taking the part of one of those drab and superficially expressionless female figures that seem so curiously characteristic of her art. Discovering that the plays were printed in pamphlet form

¹ "Plays." Susan Glaspell. Boston: Small, Maynard and Co.

by a little bookshop down in Greenwich Village, I read them all, and rejoiced as much as when I saw them acted. Now they are available as a book at last, and I have enjoyed them once more.

As I read "Trifles" this time, I was haunted by a sense of connexion with something else that had made an equally profound impression on my mind. Suddenly it came to me: "Riders of the Sea." It is not a question of likeness, and still less of imitation in any sense. But those two plays are to me chips of one block. Both have come out of the same inexhaustible spring of common human experience whence great poets of all times have drawn the bitter but cathartic draught of tragedy.

"Stuff and nonsense," cried one man to whom I ventured my daring comparison. "Where is the fine language you find in Synge? Your lady never produced anything like this: 'Let you come on now, I'm saying, to the lands of Iveragh and the Reeks of Cork, where you won't set down the width of your two feet and not be crushing fine flowers, and making sweet smells in the air.'"

No, she did not. Iowa farmers do not talk like Aran Islanders. If they did, Miss Glaspell's credit would be less than it is. The tongue of Ireland breeds poetry naturally and almost mechanically. It has to be wrung by hard labour and unusual vision out of the thrifty soil of the Middle West. There is one rule to which genuine artists of all times and climes seem to have subscribed almost without exception. It is known as the rule of economy of means. It signifies that the smaller and simpler your apparatus is, the greater is your art if you succeed in making a lasting impression. Measured according to this rule, "Trifles" is a masterpiece indeed.

Its setting is sordid. Its people are ordinary. Its dialogue is as commonplace as commonplace minds can make it when afraid of being shaken out of their customary commonplaceness. The one thing unusual about it is the event forming the background of the action—or rather lack of action—that constitutes the play. A woman has killed her husband after living with him for thirty years. Having killed him, and done so in a rather eccentric manner, she has lapsed back into that rut of hopeless uneventfulness where she has lived a corpse-like existence ever since her marriage. The men see nothing but a puzzling crime. The women find—a killed canary! And in their minds one killing naturally links up with the other. They understand, and in their understanding lies the tragedy that pervades and glorifies the simplest word in the play. When that play is read everywhere with the same understanding, then, perhaps, the farming communities of this prosperous country will cease to populate the insane asylums and the sanatoriums for neurotics with miserable shadows of what were once living and loving and laughing maids and mothers.

It is not the size of the canvas, or the picturesqueness of colouring, or the exaltedness of theme, that constitutes the element of greatness in dramatic poetry. It is a feeling, gradually stealing upon your soul, that fate is abroad and may place its inexorable hand on your own shoulder in another moment. It is a sense of gazing into those innermost recesses of your own soul where are stored all experiences, fleeting or acute, that can not bear the light of day. It is a quick, startled recognition of the infinitesimal space separating the reassuringly ordinary from the grotesquely extraordinary. It is the awe you get out of the inevitable consequences of what you feel should never have been—an awe that you get out of "Trifles" no

less than out of "Macbeth," differently as the two plays may be graded in every other respect in the critic's scale of values.

The Shavian touch found in "Close the Book" at first sight, remained in the reading, but an impression of difference prevailed. Shaw has been said to get his effects by turning commonly accepted propositions upside down. A similar paradoxical quaintness characterizes the American playwright's work, but she seems to arrive at it by openly uttering things, of which, as a rule, we dare to think only in moments of rare temerity. Whatever her process be, however, the results are deliciously and slyly humorous. The humour thus produced is practically never absent, whether the work be labelled gay or serious. In "Close the Book" it is joyously flaunted in your face, but it may be found in "Trifles" as well, and even in "Bernice," though in a more subdued and reverently subtle form.

"Close the Book" places Riverside Drive and Greenwich Village face to face—smug conventionalism and self-conscious Bohemianism. It is hard to tell which side gets the worst of it. The author may be called an iconoclast, but not a reformer. What she tries to set right is not some petty outward thing, but our own recalcitrant spirit. And so her satire proves invariably double-edged. The laugh she draws from us may appear to be at the expense of respectability or of its opposite: in reality, it is always directed at the self-satisfied superficiality of both sides.

"Woman's Honour" is a farce that cuts more deeply than many tragedies. Its main significance to me is that it shows woman speaking out of her own nature, and not in hypnotized conformation to man's established view of her. Women have produced many fine things in literature, but the amount of genuine feminine self-revelation contained in their works is astonishingly small. Even when seeming to lay bare her innermost soul, woman has generally taken good care that the exposure should not deviate too shockingly from the conventional image of her created by man to suit purposes of his own. Now she is changing at last, in this as in so many other respects, and she is growing more and more determined to portray herself as she really is rather than as man prefers her to be—that is, as a human being moved by motives largely identical with those of man himself. Reading "Woman's Honour" in this light, we may find the essence of its lesson distilled into a remark by the "Scornful One": "Did it ever strike you as funny that woman's honour is only about one thing, and that man's honour is about everything but that thing?"

It takes no great imagination to dovetail this ironical question with a passage from "The People," characteristically placed in the mouth of one of those externally colourless women by whom Miss Glaspell likes to symbolize something in universal womanhood that is only now breaking through millennial bonds into clear and self-conscious utterance: "Let life become what it may become!—so beautiful that everything that is back of us is worth everything it cost."

The one full-length play in the collection is "Bernice." It would be hard to imagine anything more elusive. All precise analysis seems out of the question. Any attempt at detailed definition of purpose seems like handling the wings of a butterfly. Yet the haunting atmosphere and the provoking significance of the work as a whole are not to be escaped. The main person of the drama, dead when it begins, turns gradually into a living presence dominating every scene. And through this resurrection of a soul gone else-

where, we obtain another glimpse of the essence of womanhood—a glimpse evanescent as the rainbow hues on a dewdrop, yet persistent as the dying tone of a bell's final stroke: "Oh, in all the world—since first life moved—has there been any beauty like the beauty of perceiving love?"

Perhaps Miss Gaspell has tried too much in "Bernice." Perhaps she has failed in part, just because it was so much. Perhaps she has built her most ambitious play out of too delicate nuances. Perhaps the very idea of the play is too daring: a dying woman whose last bequest to her husband is the lie that she killed herself, and a man who starts life anew on that lie because he thinks that all-absorbing love for himself lured her into voluntary death. But the effort itself is so remarkable that it must be welcomed and respected.

They would probably like it in Europe, I caught myself thinking as I read the play. They are older over there. They are more patient. They dig more deeply for what is precious. They would probably uncover the buried message of this drama wrought out of the subtlest spiritual shadings. But here . . .

Then a new thought occurred to me. After all, the play came out of Iowa—out of that superlatively typical Middle West, which is supposed to be wholly preoccupied with fatuous prosperity. Other things of similar origin recurred to my memory—things falling short of perfection maybe, but nevertheless full of irresistible beauty—of that beauty which is the chosen bride of everlasting, ever-changing truth.

If we can do such things, I thought, perchance some time we may also learn to know them and to love them.

EDWIN BJÖRKMAN.

MISCELLANY.

STOCK-TAKING is a process that every business undertakes once or oftener each year, but nations are shocked into assessing the value of their goods by unexpected events, often the passing away of their greatest assets, leaders among men. We come to a curious pause at the death of William Marion Reedy. In the minds of many younger men the extraordinary scent which discovered a Chicago lawyer to be the poet of the moment will be the conspicuous "beat" of his career; or they may point to Reedy's attitude toward other writers who found their first hospitality in the columns of the *St. Louis Mirror*. True, he was a born newspaperman, with added attributes that few of his contemporaries can hope to possess. He knew men and books; he had an inquisitive mind that was ever youthful, he wrote and spoke delightfully and he was always ready to listen to ideas, even from cranks and the half-baked. His patience with such was a rebuke to his restless friends. The memory of Reedy is a temptation to speak of his charm and his kindness; of the delightful human quality that made people of every degree love him. There is no need to print reminiscences here, because he was of the stuff of which tradition is made, and for years we shall live in the undercurrent of his life.

It does seem, though, that even for those who estimated him aright while he lived, his death brings him to a sudden focus. He was pivotal in more senses than that artists instinctively grouped themselves about him. He combined talents that we usually expect to find in products of old-world culture, and he applied these to the problems of the provincial world in which we live. To him there was no essential difference between the soap-box on a St. Louis street-corner and one in Hyde Park. He could fascinate and convulse a London after-dinner audience with exactly the same sort of address as he might have delivered in Washington. He had something of the quality of the citizen of the world

without sacrificing anything of the passion that bound him to his country. He knew the difference between foreground, middle distance and background, never confusing ward politics with international relations. He liked to dine at the Plaza, if the company was good, but good company made him quite as much at home at Child's. When his attention was directed toward spirit-dictated literature he permitted no prejudice to interpose, but fathered it before a sceptical world; yet the columns of his paper and his letters to friends prove that he was equally sensitive and receptive towards art regardless of the form in which it revealed itself. All of which leads one to regard him as one of the outstanding harbingers of the America that our younger artists, thinkers and engineers are brooding over. His world-outlook was not restricted by his loyalty to Missouri and his editorial point of view was that of Washington quite as much as that of St. Louis. As a cultural influence he is above the need of a Hall of Fame or an Academy. He stands securely among the makers of the real America.

WHAT is going to happen now that women jurors are empanelled for trying cases in English courts? One worthy magistrate seems to be under the impression that the work of the courts will not be lightened by this innovation. He is afraid that trials will be considerably lengthened because of the inexperience of the women as to the procedure and methods of the courts, which he says are an exclusively masculine institution. He is quite right about this; the male has certainly run things his way in making laws and administering them ever since the days of Manu. But why should it be imagined that a jury of women or a mixed jury should make the work of the courts longer and heavier? Is the judge's opinion merely one of those extraordinary perversities of the dominating male which comes to the surface whenever a prerogative of the male is in jeopardy? It may be so. But if it be true that at least seventy-five per cent of the cases which come before our courts are connected directly and indirectly with women, it would seem that female jurors could not add to but rather diminish the prevailing ignorance and obtuseness which clouds the male mind with regard to so much that is characteristically feminine and easily understood by women. The reply of the poor woman in a London police court to a magistrate who told her to tell the truth and not waste the time of the court, is worth repeating: "Waste time? Me? Me, that's got seven children and a week's washing waiting to be done? Wasting time, and me with a worthless husband that studied for the law? If your Honour was a woman and had to work all day to make both ends meet, and think all night how you was going to do it when you got your pay, you wouldn't be sitting up there with a wig on, in an easy chair, telling me not to waste time." Perhaps a little candour of this sort now and then would do a good deal to speed up cases and be, at any rate, an excellent foil for the witticism of breezy judges and the airy persiflage of scintillating barristers, which now take up so much of the time of the courts.

MEMBERS of the Russian aristocracy, and admirals and generals of the old regime, have frequently since the fall of the Romanovs shown a decided talent for meeting the emergencies of the day. In New York a once-rich Russian general is found working in a garage. In Paris a noblewoman has opened a pastry-shop. Numbers of instances of fallen imperial greatness finding something to which the hand may be turned in the ranks of labour or the avenues of trade are to be found recorded in the newspapers; but there is nothing unusual in this, and why such heavy headlines and great space should be devoted to announcing these changes in fortune and vocation is hard to tell unless there be more romance in a fall from great position than there is in a rise from a lowly one. When Sir James Barrie wrote his play "The Admirable Crichton" he no doubt thought it was just as well to have

a fling at the British snob, and to show that a butler under emergency would prove himself to be the superior of his employer and his employer's family. The play was a great success, for the stalls smiled good-naturedly and voted it an amusing fantasy. The pit and the gallery on the other hand thought it true to life, and that in every humble cottage there was a chap worthy to don the purple if he ever got the chance. Not long ago a great Russian admiral was found taking a ride in a second-class trolley-car on the Riviera. His clothes were the worse for wear and for some months his pocket book had been extremely light. It was known he had been doing his own housekeeping and chores in a small apartment in a little village where many of his country-people had taken refuge after the revolution. The friend who came into the trolley-car was amazed to see him carrying a little market-basket from which there sprouted the leaves of vegetables and the end of a yard of French bread. He did not seem embarrassed. Bidding good-day to his friend, his face broke into a happy smile; and holding up between his finger and thumb an egg, he cried: "Better than pearls. The first I shall taste for six months. I wish it was so big I invite you all to dinner. When you came in I was thinking wezzer I cook 'im what you call poach or fry or *le coq*." He was perfectly happy, and found lots of new duties to keep his mind young. Change of fortune is not always to be regretted. Indeed some people never know they are living until they are forced to enter life.

THERE is one thing about Sir Edward Carson that is undeniable and that is his belief in an ascendancy party. No one can charge him with being at any time in his career a supporter of majorities. When the House of Commons passed the Home Rule Bill three times with large majorities before the war began, he was dead against the constitutional method of settling the question. For him the Ulster minority was everything. Indeed, he was prepared to fight unto the last ditch. Were not invitations sent out from some of the pulpits of the covenanters to the Kaiser to come to their help, as the only Protestant monarch in Europe? The policy was the maintenance of the minority at all costs and "damn the consequences." To preserve this ascendancy, British ministers were to be hung at lamp-posts. The British army was to mutiny against the Government's orders to go into Ulster to protect the munition depots. The will of the minority was to prevail, and seventy-five per cent of Ireland was to remain under his heel. Carson had been consistent and there is every reason why, thinking as he does, he should stick to his policy. The British government has shown over and over again that it regards him as the greatest autocrat in Europe. Did not Asquith, when he wouldn't knuckle to the Kaiser, knuckle down to Carson? Does not Lloyd George do Carson's bidding, in spite of every political warning to the contrary. Why should Carson be inconsistent and change his attitude? Just recently in the House of Commons there has been a fierce debate upon the question of British frightfulness in India. The massacre of unoffending natives at Jallianwalla Bagh was discussed, and, though Asquith denounced it as "one of the greatest outrages in the history of the country," and Churchill referred to it as "an extraordinary and monstrous event without parallel or precedent in the recent history of the British Empire," Carson launched a terrific attack upon the Government for not supporting its military representatives in India. That is Carson all over. To him, the minority is sacred; to him, frightfulness is a civilizing necessity; to him, ascendancy is the breath of his nostrils. The only thing about Carson that seems to change is his face. It is as a rule grim, forbidding, "all sullen and glower," as a Scottish member once said of it; and yet there sometimes comes upon it a most charming winning smile. Once in the Commons he got a very hearty cheer for showing the House that smile. He must somewhere have a sense of humour. Hidden away among his political prejudices and religious antipa-

thies there must be a human streak, and, who knows, some day it may be touched, and a smile may reveal that he has felt the humour of the Irish situation.

JOURNEYMAN.

POETRY.

CALENDAR.

Of a Little Garden on Lake Champlain.

Sometimes the sun, like a big bee
Choosing the flowers he will bring to bloom,
Dreams over my garden,
So still the dust shines on his burning wings.
And sometimes he swings away towards the evening star
To fill his basket claws with night.
Come morning, he sprinkles darkness with his gold,
Rubs legs together—I saw him do it—
And there's a purple larkspur tapering into rose
And blood-red columbine—
It's July then.
Or the big bee finds a flaming dawn,
Scours it with pollen from his back
And there's a poppy's glossy wrinkled cup—
Then it's June.

At times he scoops the white crest off a wave
Into the basket of his claws—
I've seen the big bee skip upon the lake for joy—
Then zi-ig! he's back again
Spreading some lilies by the sandy path,
White with gold dashed on their lips
Where he clings—the big bee—sucking.
I know he's there because the bells ring so:
Seven lilies, then five, then four,
I count them on their stems,
An octave's length of melody,
A little running song of happiness—
It's August then.

But now he's quiet.
Some waste of gold in autumn leaves and fields,
And gold upon the lake—pale leaf of drifting waters
Cut by the wild duck's close, sharp flight—frets him.
For he must store in steep sky granaries much bannered
gold
With which to hang a hundred winter dawns and dusks.
Still, he spares a little for my garden's need,
Spreading it in marigolds and frost—
It is September then—October too.

The bee, the big bee, the burning bee
Begins and ends in gold.
In spring, knocking the snow from rosy apple bloom,
He climbs the sky with fagots on his back
To scatter them in yellow willow twigs and daffodils;
And when he leaves my garden for his sleep,
Flings daffodils along an evening sky—
It's May then, and April, too.

Some say there are no sky daffodils and no big bee.
Pooh! I say the sun is a bee, a big bee, a burning bee,
And bears the whole world's wealth upon his back.
What if he is a ruby humming bird betimes
Or a saffron butterfly
Or a gray-hooded moth at dusk!
I've seen him when he was an emerald dragon fly
About my little garden's pool,
But not for long.
He has his mysteries.
His winter's cell of silver white has neither rose nor red
nor gold.
Who would not like the change? . . .
I say the sun is a bee, a big bee, a burning bee,
I know!

JEANNETTE MARKS.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

A COURTEOUS EXPLANATION.

SIRS: The programme advocated by Mr. Pinchot in your columns, and your comments thereon were to me strangely reminiscent of the gospel according to Henry George and the arguments advanced by many of his latter-day followers; but I admit error in calling the programme "single-tax." I regret my inaccuracy the more because it evidently destroyed the entire meaning of my letter, which in brief was this:

1. I believe that the programme under discussion is wrong in theory because it fails effectively to deal with the class-struggle, and I do not believe that the cure of special privilege is to be found in the abolition of economic rent to the extent you would seem to imply. Rather I believe that the capitalist system itself must be overthrown.

2. I believe that regardless of the theories advanced, such a programme as you propose is highly unpractical and impossible of attainment because it seems to me to be theory only. It ignores classes and does not have back of it the common need of any great group or class of people. The abolition of special privilege is a common enough liberal aspiration. Many theories have been advanced to this end from Henry George to Woodrow Wilson's "New Freedom"; but capitalism has gone its way, centering more and more of the wealth of the world in the hands of the few. I can not see why our individualistic philosophy can hope to fare any better than the old liberal idealism, for so-called Big Business will shun it or exploit it, and labour-unions, without whose action, I maintain, economic action for your purposes is practically unthinkable, can have little faith in such individualism in the midst of our present industrial strife.

3. Realizing the menace of a bureaucratic State socialism it seems to me that the English Guild-Socialist group is of great significance to America as well as to Britain; because, while believing in group-ownership of capital, they are vitally concerned with the rights and freedom of the individual. I am, etc.,

Paterson, N. J.

EVAN W. THOMAS.

We appreciate Mr. Thomas's willingness to re-examine his use of the term "single tax." We wish he would now re-examine the rest of the terms he uses, so that we might know how to reply to his letter.

For example, the terms "class" and "class-struggle." Mr. Thomas says that the programme which we discussed with Mr. Amos Pinchot "ignores classes and does not have back of it the common need of any great group or class of people." Let us see. The whole of the land-values of the United States is owned by, at the outside, ten per cent of the population. Hence, this one form of private monopoly of economic rent has expropriated about one hundred million people. These, in our judgment, constitute a group or class, and Mr. Pinchot's programme certainly has back of it their "common need" of reappropriation—which would unquestionably be effected by the confiscation of economic rent. Mr. Thomas is undoubtedly capable of tracing the effect of this reappropriation upon all the problems of trades-unionism and of labour in general, and we hope he will do so.

Then, what does Mr. Thomas mean by "capital" and "capitalism"? If by capital he means what we do, namely, that portion of wealth which is used to facilitate the production of more wealth, we are at a loss to see how capitalism could centre "more and more of the wealth of the world in the hands of the few." The fact is, of course that capitalism never did, never will or can, do anything of the kind.

Our impression is that Mr. Thomas, like many others, uses economic terms as mere stereotyped forms or clichés, and in so doing them, understands neither what he says nor whereof he affirms.

—EDITORS.

HIGH COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE.

SIRS: I have just received a letter from my publishers sent to authors and editors of their educational books, outlining the enormous increase in the cost of publishing, and asking them to accept for the present and until 1 August, 1921, a royalty of the same number of cents per volume as that which was paid in September, 1919. They say that even with the increase in the price of their books, they can not make both ends meet unless the authors accept this reduction. I thought you might be interested in the matter. Personally, I do not see how publishers can swing things at present.

It occurs to me, however, (I am but an humble author of text-books and know little of commercial practice) that when the prosperous firm whose imprint is on my title-pages increased the retail price they might have added a cent or two so as to permit me to get the percentage stipulated in my contract, instead of coolly abrogating the agreement, or forcing me to consent to the change, which is the same thing. I am, etc.,

J. G. H.

CRITICISM AS IS.

SIRS: Your editorial on American literature and criticism in the current *Freeman* leads me to comment on a particularly flagrant instance of the workings of the American theatre and its journalistic satellites.

Last Sunday a play called "A Man of the People" by Thomas Dixon, opened at the Princess Theatre in Chicago. The theme of the piece as stated by the eminent author, in a programme-note, has to do with the determination of the Republican National Committee to oust Lincoln as the nominee of his party for a second term. This avowedly political theme resolves itself into a series of mawkish and incredibly tedious episodes in which the martyred President is represented as a sentimental, loquacious, self-pitying old man with an alarming tendency to issue passes, permits, pardons, to all comers, Union or Confederate. The technique which shaped this Dixonian drivel is of such utter futility that the dramatist reaches a conclusion only by making a sudden telegraphic announcement that Sherman has entered Atlanta; thereupon the Republican National Committee sings loudly and cavorts noisily.

This piece was received by the dramatic critics of the Chicago papers with perfect earnestness. One writer opined sagely and elegantly that the Dixon *opus* would assuredly "put a crimp" into John Drinkwater's "Abraham Lincoln" when it arrived here, and that the English poet's play did not read as well as the American novelist's work acted. All the newspapermen vied with one another in their use of adulatory description. Serious comparison of the work of a first-rate literary man with that of a hack novelist, was the order of the day.

Perhaps this is patriotism, perhaps advertising. In any event Mr. Dixon bids fair to make a great deal of money, as do the managers of the Princess Theatre. I am, etc.,

C. S.

THEY ALSO SERVE, ETC.

SIRS: These eighteen issues of your indispensable paper have proved to be the proverbial straw, for, loaded on the body of my prior reading and experience they have converted me to the "radical" doctrine of economic rather than political activity. Heretofore I have tried to be a sincere liberal; believing that it was every man's duty to be active in politics on behalf of "clean" and forward looking candidates and parties; once upon a time I was even a delegate to a national Progressive convention! Now, with you, I am a slightly amused but neutral spectator. But where do I fit in? Having got me into this fix I feel that you should, if possible, answer this question.

I am discouraged and feel myself to be a very unnecessary citizen. I have just finished reading the press accounts of the diatribes and insults which some of the Labour party delegates at Chicago hurled at the "plutes, intellectuals and lawyers" sitting with the Committee of Forty-eight—a few of them, by the way, friends of mine, in whose sincerity, mental acumen and ability to render great service to labour I have great faith.

If labour in America (it seems to be much different in England) refuses to consort with other than genuine horny-handed sons of toil, what can the lawyer, business man, journalist or scientist do, who believes in the economic doctrine you preach, and honestly stands ready to assist and work with labour as far as his capacities go—and that with neither demand nor desire for compensation. If labour really gets the small end of things, as the advanced labour leaders preach and as I believe, how can they blame the intelligent young man at the threshold of life, who seeing this deliberately selects more remunerative work, and work offering a greater scope for creative effort and directive ability?

Then if this same young man is fair enough to perceive and admit the inequalities of the present system, why should he be barred from helping things along in his little way? Such a stand on his part generally results in his ostracism by his respectable banko-commercial friends and if he is also spurned by labour he is in a bad way.

So I again ask just where does such a one fit in under your scheme of operation? I am, etc.,

Washington, D. C.

G. G. RORKE.

P. S. As one of the "misguided folks" who went to Chicago with Dr. De Valera in the interest of an Irish recognition plank and who was therefore read out of the movement by Judge Cohalan, your statement of this case and your previous articles on Ireland are much appreciated and valued.

WHAT CITIZENSHIP IS NOW WORTH.

SIRS: As a reader of your magazine, I feel you might be interested in knowing that on the twenty-eighth day of May, this year, in the Federal court at Indianapolis, before Judge Albert B. Anderson, I, the undersigned, was deprived of my citizenship papers. The facts in the matter are as follows:

During the steel strike in Gary, I took an active part as attorney for the strikers; thereby, I presume, arousing the animosity of the Steel Company and resulting in the revoking of my citizenship papers. During the course of the trial, Judge Anderson seemed to lay particular stress on the fact that I was a refugee from the Tsar's justice, having escaped from Siberia in 1906.

Perhaps the readers of your magazine might be interested in knowing what citizenship amounts to at the present time in the United States. I am, etc.,

Gary, Indiana.

PAUL P. GLASER.

AN ENGLISH CRITIC'S WORDS.

SIRS: In the short life of the *Freeman* you have spread before your readers a wonderful feast of good things but you have excelled even your own high standard with these wonderful reminiscences of Tolstoy, by Maxim Gorky. Here, indeed, is meat and drink for the soul.

I wonder if you have seen what Mr. Massingham, the editor of the London *Nation*, has said of these reminiscences which have just been published in England:

I must have scaled mountains of literature about Tolstoy, but never did I get such a vision of him as in Gorky's "Reminiscences," which I believe Mr. Lansbury brought over from Russia, and of which Mr. Koteliensky and Mr. Woolf have made a precious translation (The Hogarth Press). They make an astonishing physical portraiture; and yet that is as nothing compared with the exhibition of Tolstoy's soul. I suppose some people will find it horrible to discover that Tolstoy was a man, not a god, and possessed a good stock of some primitive human (and Russian) characteristics. The book did not horrify me; it held me breathless, much as if I had been given a peep through some prehistoric glade at the gambolling of a Colossus. Yet there is nothing new to students of Tolstoy. Sensitive himself, Gorky italicizes Tolstoy's extreme sensibility: showing him at one moment weeping at his remembrance of how a drunken woman in Moscow looked, and at the next roaring with laughter at a broad story (he approved it apparently, because it fed his hatred of women), mercilessly probing at other people's souls (including poor Chekhov's, whom he loved) and hiding away his own, only to give it away a little later. Gorky confesses himself swept off his feet, and possessed now by love, and now by fear and hatred, of the tremendous and implacable old hero.

I am, etc.,

H. M.

THE HERMITAGE COLLECTION.

SIRS: A little time ago your esteemed contributor Journeyman in one of his no less esteemed paragraphs, speculated as to the fate of the famous Hermitage collection of art-treasures, which before the war gave Petrograd eminence among the art-centres of Europe. Doubtless Journeyman has heard the good news which has lately reached this country from an authoritative source, that during all these years of war and revolution no harm has come to any of these priceless paintings. But perhaps this encouraging bit of news, so obscurely recorded in our newspapers, may have escaped the attention of many of your readers, whose interest in the Hermitage collection has been quickened by Journeyman's reference thereto. May I then quote briefly from the interesting statement recently made by M. Ivan Morosov, the famous Russian collector of French modernists?

Not a single canvas or statue [says M. Morosov] has been harmed in any museum in Russia by the partisans of the Soviet Government. The Hermitage collection was moved to Moscow when the fall of Petrograd seemed probable, just as the Louvre collections were transported to the south of France when Paris was in danger during the war. The stories about moujiks making boots out of Rembrandts, and all the other tales of the same kind are pure fantasies. I can speak from experience, for my own collection of modern French art has been nationalized by the Soviet Government and made into a public museum. Not a single canvas has been mutilated or destroyed. I was appointed sub-director of the museum, and my duties consisted in compiling a comprehensive catalogue of the contents. The director of the museum is Boris Ternovetz, a pupil of the French sculptor Bourdelle. A national art-committee is taking a census of all the works of art in Russia, and if any of these are found to be in danger the committee at once proceeds to have them safeguarded. Frequently they are brought to Moscow and exhibited to the public. The Soviet Government's artistic and intellectual policy is remarkable, and is due not only to private initiative but to the vision of Lunacharsky, Minister of Public Instruction.

All of which is very cheering, and the world is not only much indebted to M. Morosov (who is now in Paris) for telling this good news, but to the French authorities for allowing him to do so. I am, etc.,

J. M. P.

BOOKS.

LABOUR AND POLITICS.

In her "Short History of the American Labour Movement," Mrs. Mary Beard has not only supplied the student of the works of Professor Commons and his associates with a text-book admirably lucid and condensed, but she has achieved what is far more difficult in writing a text-book—especially in a field where no text-book exists—a connected and in many ways a dramatic story.

One reader at least, closed this little guide-book with a feeling that he had been conducted through a mountainous country of lofty peaks and deep valleys, reaching at the end no final stopping-place but rather felt himself to be standing on a high plateau, seeking out, in his mind's eye, the way for future pioneers. The peaks were those stages where in the slow, upward striving of the workers towards freedom and power, the degree of organization attained was sufficient to secure permanent results; the valleys were those woeful periods of disintegration, financial collapse and unemployment when, as a consequence, labour had perforce to change its course and try fresh paths—new policies and new methods of adjustment and "preparedness."

Although throughout the whole world of labour the same general law would seem to apply—that labour activity takes a political trend during periods of trade depression and an industrial trend during periods of trade expansion, the illustrations of this law in the case of American labour are remarkably interesting. While the reader of Mrs. Beard's story will be impressed by the comparatively high degree of trades-union development reached in this country at certain points, very far apart, during the 19th century, he will be shocked by the catastrophic effects on that development wrought by the financial crises of 1837, 1857, and 1873. But when he is reminded that besides these economic upheavals there were constantly at work in the labour world two silent forces of disintegration—the *Drang nach Westens* symbolized by the Free Homesteads Act of 1862 and the stream of cheap immigrant labour from Europe (accelerated by the Alien Contracts Immigration Law of 1864), he will be struck with astonishment at the recuperative power shown by American labour, as well as with its readiness to seek in other quarters remedies for the deficiencies of its industrial equipment.

The study of American labour up to the middle 'eighties must appear as a series of tragedies to one who is a trades-unionist all the time and nothing else—who has no use for economic and social theories but believes in the power of the trades-union by internal discipline and exclusive membership to win all that is wanted in the way of economic betterment. To such an one the formulation in 1886 of the American Federation of Labour will seem, if not the dawn of the millennium, at any rate the dawn of the first period of practical wisdom and enduring strength which American labour had yet known.

What were the principles on which the A. F. of L. was founded and to which, according to Mr. Gompers, it owes its thirty-four years of continual growth? Briefly, these. The unit—a national or international organization; a strong benevolent-fund; all power to the central executives, none to the locals; each trade for itself, and avoidance as far as possible of the weapon of the sympathetic strike; no politics; no truck with reformers and socialistic theories. After all there is nothing peculiarly native to the soil of America about any of these principles. They are to be found, for example, in the unwritten constitutions of scores of British crafts-unions to-day. If, however, the student of the labour-movement is not prepared to take *au pied de la lettre* all that is claimed for the A. F. of L. by its admirers, he will want to ask two questions; to both of which a partial answer at any rate is to be found in Mrs. Beard's pages.

¹"Short History of the American Labour Movement." Mrs. Mary Beard. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

First, have all the political activities of American labour, its alignment at different periods with the platforms of various radical groups, been entirely misguided and vain?

Secondly, does the thirty-year policy of the A. F. of L. to-day satisfy the aspirations of the great mass of American workers?

The answer to the first question appears to be that when American labour has attempted to realize by organized political effort any social reform which was not a mere importation from abroad, its efforts have frequently been crowned with success. This is true of its political activity between 1837 and 1842 when it fought successfully for the ten-hour day and a national system of education. It is true again of the period from 1873 to 1879 when a national Agrarian-Labour party was organized and polled in 1878 a vote large enough to terrify the politicians of the older parties. Had the Greenback plank of the farmers at that time been based upon a sounder economic theory and its alliance with labour not come to an end with the rise of a new period of prosperity, who knows but that a powerful third party might then have become a reality in American politics? In any case this older alliance of the farmers and workers against the merchant-jobbers is to-day full of significance for the future. It has its present-day parallel in the innumerable local alliances which are being formed in the western states between the farmers and labour for purposes of common defence against the all-powerful financial interests; and also (on the Greenback side) in that astonishing experiment in guild-socialism, the Non-partisan League Government of North Dakota. (It is a pity, by the way, that Mrs. Beard has no reference to the League and its industrial significance.)

The answer to the second question is even more definite. Everywhere to-day there are indications that American labour, both inside and outside the ranks of the A. F. of L., is thoroughly dissatisfied with the restrictions placed by the Federation on the right of the individual worker in one trade to combine with his fellow-worker in another for the achievement of purposes wider than those comprised in the old formula of "wages, hours and working conditions." With the result that we have on the one hand, a movement in favour of such large political changes as the nationalization of the railways and the mines (a movement which, in regard to the railways, has already swept down the opposition of the official heads of the A. F. of L.); and, on the other hand, a strong rank and file movement in favour of the local combination for common purposes of all workers in all industries. In this connexion it is worth noting that the Central Federated Union of New York has recently been reconstituted on a membership basis of 750,000—surely the largest federation of organized labour in one locality anywhere in the world. Again there is that remarkable experiment in industrial unionism, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, which has by its establishment of a forty-four-hour week and other achievements, marked out for organized labour a road, which if it leads anywhere, leads eventually to a radical reconstruction of society. The preamble to the constitution of this powerful organization contains this paragraph:

The working-class must accept the principle of industrial unionism or it is doomed to impotence. The same forces that have been making for industrial unionism are likewise making for a closer inter-industrial alliance of the working-class. This inevitable process will eventually lead to a universal working-class organization united along the entire line of the class-struggle, economically and politically; instead of being split up and divided against itself as it unfortunately is at present under the antiquated teachings and methods.

This paragraph was written in 1914. In the years that have since elapsed, much has occurred throughout the world of labour in all countries to give precision and emphasis to the ideas therein set forth.

ARTHUR L. DAKYNS.

DREAMERS OF THE FJORDS.

ONE thinks successively, in exploring the work of Johan Bojer for the first time, of Ibsen, Thomas Hardy and Hans Christian Andersen. His latest group of tales¹—for they are too restricted in their scope to be novels in the accepted English and American sense—are characterized by biting social satire, by a profound consciousness of the impotence of man in the hands of fate, and by an aloof and objective method of treatment. These are expressions of the soul of an artist. But the artist is also a moralist. If one were to try to understand Johan Bojer through his books one might guess that he had been at one time in passionate rebellion against institutions, a follower of causes, of 'isms; that years and experience had convinced him that the reform of institutions was but a beginning, that it was not enough; and that he had finally rejected mass action as of slight value in bringing the individual into harmony with his world. His ultimate attitude seems to be expressed in the reflections of Harold Mark:

Dreams are a crime. Realities are money, robbery, police, prisons and war. The rest is nonsense. You who try to take a share in everything that happens, you with the wounded, bleeding world's conscience, you stretch yourself upon the cross and suffer and bleed like a fool. You help no one. Reality continues its course. . . . You see only the millions of Judas-souls with steel, and blood, and money, and betrayal—those that prophesy evil and are always right. But are there not others besides them? . . . They are dreamers like you. You are nothing, but you may surely bow down to them. They carried a world-picture in their breast, of which they wanted to know the meaning—like you. They were powerless against an armour-plated world—like you. They suffered on a world-cross—like you. They were dreamers, and yet they are the torch-bearers in the procession of mankind; and it is owing to them that there is not night over the earth.

It is a real crucifixion that Johan Bojer's dreamers must undergo, and but one of his characters in these three volumes can be said to emerge with any degree of triumph. "Treacherous Ground" and "The Face of the World" are studies of the failure of a mere humanitarianism. In the former Erik Evje's fancied love of his fellows is in reality a monstrous egotism. Evje's dead father has enriched himself by "turning the peasants' corn and potatoes into spirits, and then, when they were drunk, buying their farms from them in order to plunder the forest." Evje himself has ruined the daughter of a labourer on his ancestral farm and has then betrayed a friend, and he tries to dull his disgust with life by strong drink. The dream of doing good to others as a means of personal salvation, on earth, for himself, comes to him, and Newlands, which he gives to the people whom he conceives himself and his father to have wronged, becomes, as it were, his donation to the church, his pilgrimage to Jerusalem. When he learns that Newlands is on "treacherous ground" he can not bear to undo his one good act by inducing its tenants to leave it. So his dream of small proprietorships slides into the fjord. "There's something," he says, "that's worse to lose than property and life. That's what I—."

Dr. Harold Mark, in "The Face of the World," is the modern anchorite whose vivid sense of the sorrows of humanity kills the possibility of joy in his own life. "Did it never strike you as humorous," he asks, "that we insist upon doctoring people, but if the poor devils ask whether it's worth their while to get well again—, why, then we're at a loss for an answer?" The question haunts him, it invades his home, breaks up his happy married life, sends him to live in the slums, makes him a socialist. The insoluble problem of Ivar Holth, the helpless victim of a love whose evil results no reform or revolution could cure, convinces Mark that humanitarianism is not enough. The end is an escape, not a solution. The question remains, what is one to do if one loves justice in a hopelessly unjust world and beauty in a world most of whose inhabitants are shut off from it?

¹"The Face of the World." "The Power of a Lie." "Treacherous Ground." Johan Bojer. New York: Moffat, Yard and Company.

In "The Power of a Lie" the just man, Henry Wangen, whose good intentions are only equalled by his weakness, ends in prison, whereas the unjust man, who is responsible for his downfall, wins not only the applause of his neighbours but the approval of his own conscience. This ending seems to Hall Caine, who writes the introduction and considers the book a great one, quite immoral—as immoral as life, perhaps. But perhaps the moral lies too deep for the casual eye. Henry Wangen is not a positively good or moral force, but a wishy-washy person who would like to do good to his fellows if he knew how. And Knut Norby is not the first man who has stumbled into evil-doing and later absolved himself when he found that others had overlooked the act, or misconstrued it. The Norwegian community, as Bojer sees it, is composed quite largely of benevolent fools and malicious fools, and perhaps the presentation of such a community as praising Knut Norby, the liar, and crucifying Henry Wangen, the innocent victim, is rather moral than otherwise. But at best this is a grim version of the book of Job—grim and masterful.

Bojer does not allow himself the luxury of beauty except where it aids his story. He strips his narrative bare, trims it exquisitely to the least detail, and lets it glide straight before the wind, like a vessel sailing down one of his own wildly lovely fjords. His Mother Nature, true to the Scandinavian precedent, does not love her children foolishly, but bides her time, punishing them without logic, and finally, when her patience is exhausted, bundles them off willy-nilly to their cold beds. The same racial genius that in its ancient mythology prophesied an evil end to the world and the defeat of all the good gods prevails in these contemporary fables, full as they are of the most modern modernism. The meaninglessness of it all is put into the melancholy song of Lars Brovold, driving through the winter twilight with the coffin of the woman he loved:

Oh, doodeli doo!
Oh, doodeli doo!
Oh, doodeli, doodeli doo!

The greatest art usually deals with defeat, with transiency, and Johan Bojer is undoubtedly a great artist, although by no means a luxuriant and happy one. He has been aided in his American venture by the admirable translation of Jessie Muir, which deserves the highest praise; the reader is never aware that an alien tongue intervenes between himself and the author.

ROBERT L. DUFFUS.

THREE LANCASHIRE PLAYS.

HAROLD BRIGHOUSE'S "Three Lancashire Plays,"¹ products, all of them, of the Manchester Repertory Theatre, suggest once more what a genuine local theatre can do for the drama. Time and the furies of the war have probably obliterated in the minds of those Americans who remember the Irish Players' tour, Lady Gregory's vehement assertions that they had created a theatre in Dublin in order to make Irishmen want to write for it. Lady Gregory herself turned playwright because the Abbey needed comedy. Yeats hauled Synge out of his Paris garret in order that a group of Irish amateurs might make over a second-rate poet into one of the finest of modern dramatists. Boyle, Colum, Fitzmaurice, Ray, Murray and Lennox Robinson, of "The Lost Leader," all turned to playwrighting because Yeats and Lady Gregory had set an honest, intelligent theatre functioning before them. In Great Britain the so-called repertory theatres, which sprang, as the Abbey had sprung, from the subsidy and inspiration of Miss A. E. F. Horniman, brought their playwrights in turn. Outside Manchester they were rarer, as the theatres were less sturdy, but we still remember the "Bunt" that came from Glasgow; and we can rejoice that Birmingham turned an insurance clerk into the author of "Abraham Lincoln."

Just what Mr. Brighouse was before Miss Horniman's

theatre seized upon his brain, as it had seized upon the brains of Stanley Houghton and Alan Monkhouse, we do not know. Not an inspired writer, it is safe to say. Nowhere in his plays is there any of the sureness and clean-cut skill of Houghton. His plots are neither simple and exact, nor, on the other hand, marvels of good carpentry. They are either too weak or too strong, invertebrate or too dependent on situation. If his craftsmanship is a fair test, Brighouse would have been a hack novelist in London. But the Manchester Repertory Theatre was a fact not to be ignored. It took hold of Brighouse and insisted that he write about the people and things of Lancashire. It wanted the truth about these curious, hard and homely men and women; it cared nothing for the ability to imitate Pinero or Haddon Chambers at second hand. Consequently we have here three plays in which Brighouse's keen sense of good stage-humour, and his knack for observing character are applied to a people and a life that he could know honestly at first hand. "The Game" revolves around a characteristic activity of the larger industrial towns, professional football, and recalls the conflict of the younger generation with the old, which seems so much sharper on the Manchester stage than in the mimic drawing-rooms of London's fashionable playwrights. In "Zack" Mr. Brighouse has enlarged again upon the type of good-hearted Lancashire simpleton we met in his "Lonesome-like" and "Hobson's Choice," a type not naturally stupid but stunted mentally by the hard ways of materialistic Lancashire. The historical basis of that life finds an interesting record in "The Northerners," a drama of one of the scores of pitiful rebellions which swept through Lancashire between the first days of the Industrial Revolution and the time of Victoria. The human and historical material is so fascinating that one can not help regretting that Mr. Brighouse should have produced a drama of violent incident and of characterization parallel to "The Letter of the Law," instead of a direct historical study in dramatic terms of the great men and small who fought that hopeless fight against the new machines. Between the days of the first weavers who broke frames and those of the Chartists and Cobbett, Place and Godwin, there is capital material for half a dozen dramas as moving, as liberal, and as filled with the stuff of martyrdom as "Abraham Lincoln." Perhaps, however, the record of the repertory theatres of England in self-expression is staunch enough to excuse Mr. Brighouse, and to warrant Mr. Drinkwater's jaunt to the America of the Civil War in search of historical material.

K. M.

SHORTER NOTICES.

MR. DOBIE'S novel¹ may be taken perhaps as a perfected product of the collegiate "short-story" course, as the culmination of the hopes of those who have tried to tell others how to write fiction. And although it has merit, it is a rather tepid performance. The title, flaring and Western, like pointsettia or the Golden Gate, is an irrelevant after-thought: as for the plot, it is a smooth, workmanlike affair. The author writes only of what he knows, and he writes with uncommon sureness: no one who reads this novel can fail to catch a glimpse of the authentic brick and stone spirit and flesh, that go into the composition of San Francisco. So much is good, and Mr. Dobie's faults, the faults of the novice, grow less noticeable as he warms to his theme. But he fails to warm sufficiently. He handles all his situations and incidents with the indifferent care of a man following a recipe. When his stenographer heroine escapes from her too-importunate employer and, in the process of falling in love with an attractive Serbian, throws herself with abandon into a primitive Italian dance, one feels that Mr. Dobie rates abandon more highly than he would have done if he had ever experienced it. And when she comes back in the end—mercifully delivered by death from the tempestuous Serbian—to the prosperous, handsome American, the crisis is arranged too ingeniously to be convincing. The novel is in its way so true and so well done that one is surprised to find oneself so little

¹ "Three Lancashire Plays." Harold Brighouse. New York: Samuel French.

¹ "The Blood Red Dawn." Charles Caldwell Dobie. Harper and Brothers.

stirred by it. The author stands aside from the action, talking suavely, though a little nervously, and the reader listens in the same mood, and before he has quite grasped the meaning of the drama it has passed, leaving a sense of unimportant things admirably executed, of photographic impressions at once clever and pointless. Youth should not surrender itself in this too reasonable manner. In a first novel, maudlin incoherence is more encouraging than prim propriety. In spite of its riotous title, "The Blood Red Dawn" is distressingly smug.

M. A.

MAXWELL STRUTHERS BURT¹ has that most praiseworthy virtue of a pupil—he knows his lessons. More than that he has a faultless ear. Mr. Burt's ear and his learning are much indebted to Rupert Brooke—but it is a sorrowful thing to see anyone assume so easily all the palpable qualities of another. "Spring in Princeton" is almost another "Grantchester" except that it lacks the latter's rippling lightness. There are the same studied irrelevancies, the same feminine endings, the same delight in names. Mr. Burt has imitated most of the many things we would like to forget in Rupert Brooke, including his glorification of war and death. With Brooke it was a protective reaction to shield himself with beauty, made from the ugliness he was about to touch. Perhaps it is primarily protective with Mr. Burt. The lovely sonnets, with which his book opens, circle round and round this theme, saying now:

Come to the high and quiet knowledge that the dead
Are but ourselves made beautiful instead.

Over and over again poets arrive breathless at the same place, with almost the same words on their lips, as children come face to face while running through the woods. But there is none of that beautiful bewilderment in Mr. Burt's book.

G. T.

FOR the sake of the record, and for the benefit of future philologists who elect the American language as their "major," it is fortunate that George Ade still compiles an occasional book of specimens. "Hand-made Fables," his latest assortment of the vernacular, follows the pattern of its predecessors, reflecting the period which "enveloped the Great War and lapped over on the Great Unrest." We have a confirmed conviction that these fables lose their tang by being herded into a book, for there is an undeniable repetition of idea as well as phrasing. Isolated and perused at the rate of one a month, they yield a sharp and pungent flavour; bunched thus for permanence, they are flat. This is partly because of the fearful pace with which slang terms head for the discard. We are prone to consider our slang as an evidence of vigour and variety, yet one of the striking things about this volume of fables is the high percentage of its verbal coinage which is no longer in circulation. Our bright pennies of language soon lose their glitter; they pass quick through the three stages of Coney Island pop corn—brittle, sticky, stale. Luckily George Ade reinforces his medium with enough of the salt of genuine human satire to counterbalance his reliance upon a hash vocabulary.

L. B.

EVEN when one has a rich array of bold colours spread upon one's palette, there is such a thing as attempting to cover too much canvas. This is the weakness of "Passion," the new novel by Shaw Desmond. Mr. Desmond tries to crowd all the modern forces into his conflict, and frequently neutralizes his effects by the nicety with which one violence is banged against another. His picture of London life, in its meannesses and poverty, has touches of Dickens, and touches, also, of the Dickens sentimentality. For the most part, however, he is intent upon doing justice to "the child of to-day" who, separated from the past by an "unspanable gulf," has "leaped the centuries in a decade"—a feat of acrobatics which seems to have landed him right in the centre of his ego, scarcely able to peer beyond its rim. Mr. Desmond chooses to deal with this state of things with the self-consciousness of a crusader rather than the unself-consciousness of an artist. His purposes grow weak through sheer over-analysis.

L. B.

MR. LANGFORD's romance of cave-man civilization—or uncivilization—is a fossil embedded in fiction. Like the painted "restorations" of a museum, it seeks to reconstruct a distant age in the imagination. This is by no means an easy un-

dertaking. Mr. Langford's hero,¹ striving to be at once adventurously entertaining and scientifically enlightening, carries upon his bare shoulders the burden of momentous ethnological implications; he struggles for existence with one eye all the time on the future of the human race. Rudimentary emotions and primitive reactions come to him, neatly fitted into the pattern of his life, but in reality plainly tagged for posterity. Anthropology and adventure are jumbled—naively, at times—in this story which, for all its prehistoric licence, still clings to the technique of Stratemeyer and other weavers of juvenile romance. Breathless encounters on the brink of precipices, sudden attacks and providential rescues—these are the moments of suspense, and so long as the author sticks to the steep path of improbability, all goes well. But when he relaxes to taste the subtleties of antediluvian intimacies, the illusion crumbles. Violent climax and physical action maintain the primitive key, but it does not survive the sophistication of the ape-boy's "bland smile" nor the petulance of the rhinoceros who "wincled and bit his lips." The trouble with Mr. Langford's beasts is that they insist upon talking without being able to talk well. Animals should speak the wisdom of imperishable nonsense, or be silent. As an antidote for the cave man of the movies and the comic supplement, Pic has a mission, but Mr. Langford's illustrations, scattered through the book, indicate that he is more successful in drawing upon his imagination than upon Bristol board.

L. B.

A REVIEWER'S NOTE-BOOK.

IN his study of Booth Tarkington, Mr. Holliday tells us that the impelling purpose of the author of "Penrod" is "not to see things along book lines." Howells, he adds, is, in Mr. Tarkington's opinion, "the one genuinely American realist; Norris and Dreiser are Zola and Russian." An odd opinion, surely, considering that of all our modern writers Howells was the most saturated in books and in European influences as Dreiser is the least, Dreiser whose greatest handicap is that he has remained so largely an unlettered product of Mr. Tarkington's own state! What is the explanation of this fear of being influenced by books that seems to actuate so many American writers? Certainly it was his saturation in literature which made Mr. Howells the distinguished writer he was: his limitations are to be attributed, I think, to very different influences. And this may be said also of Henry James—and of Whitman! There is a myth that Whitman was a man ignorant of literature, a myth that should have been exploded long ago. It was not for nothing that Whitman spent long months reading his Homer to the rhythm of the surf. The great writer is far to seek who has not submitted himself to many masters in a passionate novitiate.

THE fear of being influenced is always a confession of weakness. The strong man, as Nietzsche said, is he who does not have to say, No!—to anything. What are they afraid of, these writers of ours who are so afraid of books, of becoming, as they say, bookish? They are afraid, let us admit it frankly, of becoming writers. Danger lies that way—the danger of self-discovery, the danger of individuality, the danger of unpopularity, the danger of a life that will involve them in the sufferings of growth, that will oblige them to surrender their formulas, that will deprive them of their easy rewards, of the admiration of their bankers, of everything that makes them one hundred and twenty-five per cent American. It is simple enough to be a writer, morally simple, I mean, once you have the secret; let no one imagine that we fancy ourselves martyrs, we others to whom literature is a mode of enjoying oneself. But those who lack the secret have reason to think us lunatics. "Paris is well worth a mass," said Henry of Navarre, but only a priest can be expected to feel that a mass is well worth Paris; and the Tarkingtons of this world are wise in their generation. (If only they did not have such unhappy faces.) It is by abstaining from influences, or rather by carefully discriminating between influences, by saying, No! very loudly indeed to some things, that they

¹"Songs and Portraits." Maxwell Struthers Burt. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

²"Hand-Made Fables." George Ade. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.

³"Passion." Shaw Desmond. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

¹"Pic, the Weapon Maker." George Langford. New York: Boni and Liveright.

hold their rank as best sellers. Indianapolis would have long since lost its integrity if Mr. Tarkington, instead of innocuously criticizing its politics, had proclaimed the right of a citizen to become, if he chooses, even "offensively bookish."

"THOSE who fear influences and shelter themselves from them," says André Gide, "make a tacit avowal of the poverty of their souls. A great man has only one care: to become as human as possible, let us say rather to become commonplace. . . . And it is thus that he becomes the more personal." There is nothing that makes one more American, for instance, than to have lived outside of America, to have subjected oneself to the greatest number of influences that are not American: William James, the one supremely characteristic American philosopher, the creator indeed of American philosophy, passed most of his formative years in Europe. And wherever we find a nation or a nation's literature stirred to new life it is always the result of influences from without. Would New England have had its Transcendentalism if Emerson had followed in the rut of his fathers instead of reading German philosophy? Would there ever have been a Restoration comedy if London had not, at a certain moment, fallen under the influence of Paris? Would the spirit of nationality in half a dozen little countries of Eastern Europe have awakened so soon if Byron had not died for liberty's sake in Greece? What is this "one hundred per cent Americanism," that we are so jealous of it? In an immortal paragraph, the editor of the *Metropolitan Magazine* has told us:

You can not be against the capitalistic system and still be for America; you can not apologize for that system or feel ashamed of it and still be a good American. You can not indeed be a good American, in the sense of being loyal to American traditions, unless you are proud of the capitalistic system.

There we have it. One hundred per cent Americanism is not Americanism at all, it is capitalism, than which there is nothing more essentially cosmopolitan. No wonder the class which is interested in preserving the capitalist system in America distrusts and hates those influences which it calls, promiscuously, bolshevik. And for just this reason we others, for whom Americanism means the heritage of a will to freedom, welcome these influences, which are so full of the spirit of experiment, of trust in the destiny of man. The literary, the creative impulse is destroyed by the commercial, the acquisitive impulse; that is why, of all possible influences, we seek those that are most in opposition to the influences dominant about us. Just as in Emerson's day the American way to strength lay through Germany, so in our day the American way to strength lies through Russia. The same impulse which, in the Puritan England of the late seventeenth century, led the English writer to subject himself to Paris, leads the American writer to-day, in commercial America, to subject himself to Petrograd.

THUS it is not without reason that we suspect the one hundred per cent American's hostility to outside influences of being a hostility with ulterior motives. It is not through ignorance merely, the simple man's distrust of the foreigner, that he wishes to keep the skirts of his coat clear. This hostility, up to a certain point (to be determined by the economists), is good for business: Mr. Tarkington, for instance, grinds his axe very successfully on it. Our popular fiction is, in fact, a sort of propaganda for business; if it does nothing more, it brushes away the cobwebs from the machine.

BUT this fear of influences is not confined to the Tarkingtons: one discovers it even in those who by no means fear the influence of Petrograd! How many radical writers would be willing to submit themselves, quite candidly, for an evening, to the influence, let us say, of Judge Gary? To weep with Judge Gary's sorrows, and exult with Judge Gary in his success? How many would

not be afraid, in such a situation, of losing a little of their radicalism: have they not witnessed the demoralization of labour-leaders who have so exposed themselves that they have caught the "House of Commons manner"? And this is why our radical literature is almost as ineffectual as our bourgeois literature. It is not the popular writers alone who are afraid of influences: the radical writers are afraid of influences also.

MR. BOARDMAN ROBINSON, the other day, went to the Republican convention in Chicago. When he came back he published in *The Liberator*, together with a series of sketches of the chief personalities at the convention, the following footnote:

I learned something at Chicago. I went feeling bright and optimistic, but the convention made a pessimist of me. I nourished the expectation of watching the politicians at their nefarious work, thought to revel in their wickedness, and tell about it with glee. But, after watching them for a week, and talking with them, in and out of the convention, the fact was slowly borne in upon me that they are not bad at all. *They're good*. That is, they are behaving just as most people would under similar circumstances. Ignorant and commonplace and out of touch with significant things, of course—but they ain't bad. This is just what discourages me—that after all they are so infernal well-meaning and decent. I shall reserve my contempt in the future for their rotten institutions.

Boardman Robinson is an artist—everyone knows that; but he never revealed the fact more clearly than in this paragraph. It is precisely because he is an artist that he was able so frankly to subject himself to the influence of his political enemies, to accept their influence and learn something from it. And that is why the sketches he made of them are so deadly! They are deadly because they are impersonal: all the force of Mr. Robinson's contempt for the institutions that Senator Harding and General Wood represent has gone into his caricatures of these worthies, and it was his understanding of these worthies as victims of their institutions that placed him, for artistic purposes, in possession of that contempt. If Mr. Robinson had been afraid of catching the "House of Commons manner" himself, he would have presented a grotesque menagerie (the menagerie of the ordinary radical cartoonist) which would have aroused in the spectator not the contempt the artist intended but a contempt for the powers of the artist himself.

BUT there are very few Boardman Robinsons; that is why the radical movement in this country lumbers along in such a stupid manner. What immense harm it suffers through the venting of innumerable feeble private grudges that convince the public of nothing but the misery of radical writers and artists themselves! Not in this way will the cause of justice ever be effectively advanced. Radical artists as a rule can not understand that their work becomes effective precisely in the degree in which they enter, impersonally, as artists, into the world of their adversaries. They are afraid of losing their convictions, they are afraid of losing their personalities, they are afraid of influences; consequently, their work can not be anything but feeble. Who is going to be convinced by a novel in which a capitalist is pictured as a Moloch devouring babies? The only enemy the capitalist needs to fear is the man who knows him through and through, who has frankly undergone his influence, who has seen him as he sees himself. It is the terrible eyes of men who understand things because they have shared them, men who have transcended their private grievances or rather universalized them, that haunt the world and give the devil sleepless nights.

THE Reviewer recommends the following recent books to the notice of readers of the *Freeman*:

"The Advancing Hour," by Norman Hapgood. New York: Boni and Liveright.

"Modern British Poetry," by Louis Untermeyer. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Howe.

"Lancelot," by Edwin Arlington Robinson. New York: Thomas Seltzer.

IN literature and all the other arts it is the basic themes that survive—certain motifs are universal and undying. And in civilized man there are definite hungers for intellectual satisfaction that persist, modified but not stilled, by environment or transitory events. His mental energies crave food regardless of wars, earthquakes and prohibition.

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That there are boundless opportunities for the FREEMAN has been evident since it began in March. Its constantly increasing circulation is due in greater measure to the advertising of its enthusiastic adherents than to any other publicity. The fact that this is summer makes little difference in our plans for wider distribution, and we urge those of our readers who wish their friends to get the benefit of the FREEMAN during the autumn, to make them acquainted with it now. We shall gladly send sample copies to any person whose name you may forward.

We renew the suggestion that you subscribe to the FREEMAN in the name of a public library where its weekly presence may serve to stimulate the thinking of a community. In the case of such subscriptions, we shall inform the library of the donor's name.

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And, though we hear little to-day of the Society for the Prevention of Useless Gifts, we should not forget the spirit that animated that organization. Therefore, remember that for \$3 you can jog a sluggish brain 26 times, and for \$6 you can jog it 52 times. By which we mean, when you make a present give something real—give the FREEMAN.

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